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THE

# CUSTOMS AND LORE

OF

# MODERN GREECE

BY

RENNELL RODD

AUTHOR OF "FREDERICK, CROWN PRINCE AND EMPEROR"
ETC., ETC.

WITH SEVEN FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

*TRISTRAM ELLIS*

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# INTRODUCTION.

THE traveller who approaches Athens for the first time whether it be across that historic sea, over which, as the last morning of his journey breaks, the shadowy forms of opal-tinted isles float one after another into sight, until before him the Acropolis grows out of the early haze, framed in the hollow of Parnes, Pentelicon, and Hymettus, or whether it be along the rich vineyard-clothed shore of the Corinthian Gulf, in view of that unsurpassed panorama where Parnassus and Helicon rise beyond the bluest of blue waters, will probably find himself susceptible to a twofold influence: a sense, on the one hand, that is partly awe and partly gladness at finding himself at last face to face with scenes that have hitherto belonged to imagination, so familiar and yet so new, touched with the magic of youthful memories, and sacred, perhaps, from maturer associations; while, on the other hand, he can hardly fail to be possessed by an overwhelming feeling of wonder and delight at the loveliness of the nature around him. What though the rocks be treeless, the lower slopes barren of all save

flowering weeds and perfumed shrubs, such beauty of form and colour he has rarely beheld, and the light that is over all is such as he never dreamed could rest on land and sea. The short space of time which it is permitted to most travellers to devote to Greece will be spent in realizing scenes made immortal by history and achievement, in growing familiar with the ruins of her ancient splendour, in studying the fragments of masterpieces that are the noblest teachers still. The memory of these, and an ineffaceable picture of the ever-changing loveliness of scene—the gorges, red with oleander, bounded by the island sea, the deep noon shadows on far amethystine hills cheated into seeming nearness by the limpid purity of air—are what he will bear away with him. Of the inhabitants and their manner of life he can know little or nothing, and will probably only gather a few false impressions from rapid generalizations made in the capital.

It is only after a long sojourn in this land of myth and fable, of art and inspiration, and after many wanderings, that one is able to learn how, in solitary islands, in sequestered valleys—sundered by physical conditions as effectively as they were two thousand years ago—there lives a people who seem to have preserved, in manner and in look, that old-world freshness of our dreams, who still live the natural life

with little heed or knowledge of the world beyond. Many a change has overshadowed them since twilight settled on their story, and men with strange tongues and iron hands have wrought their will in the land, while still they turned the soil, and pressed the grape, and gathered in the olive. They know that now a new life has sprung up in their midst; they can even feel its pulse and throb; and many of them are drawn over the mountains to take their part in the changed order. But others and the elders remain, living out their simple, uneventful lives, and the wrangle of voices over matters that are too hard for them concerns them little.

It is among these dwellers of the upland pastures, whose lives contrast so markedly with the keen working mind, the restless, fretful activity of the Greek with whom the world is more familiar, the little trader of the coast towns, who fills the counting-houses of the West, and becomes the pioneer of petty commerce throughout the East—it is among these men, in whom the stationary life of the country is perpetuated, that we find any traces that may have survived of the old-world attitude of thought in its more intimate aspects, its domestic traits, its untutored feelings about life and death, its awe of nature, and its need of God.

The pilgrim to the great historic sites will refer to the pages of historian and orator, will recall the sounding

lines which stirred the genius of a mighty people in the hour of their highest attainment; but he who follows the pathway to the mountain village, who sits with the gossip, and watches the shepherd gathering in his flocks at even, will rather have in mind the lilt of the earlier epic, the pastoral muse, and the many voices of the little lyrics of the anthology. And strangely real will they seem to him when he sees the same old life lived out, and the husbandman yoking his ox to the same old plough; as, little by little, he grows aware of the same old haunting awe that clings to lonely places, of the same familiar reverence at the shrine, the same grim dread of sunless death and the treachery of a hateful sea.

It is this side of the Greek people of to-day which will be examined in the following pages, the life and manners especially of the country-folk, who are, in reality, the fibre and heart of the nation, and who, unrecognized perhaps in great measure amid the clamour of noisy self-assertion, did her the greatest silent service at the time of her direst need. Since those days a spirit of change has undoubtedly come over the land, and, slowly though it be, new ideas are filtering in. The old customs will inevitably lose their individuality, as the old songs are fast growing silent. Much, therefore, that is recorded in the following pages can no longer be

regarded as the universal mental furniture of every Greek peasant; much can only here and there with difficulty be traced out to-day as evidence of what once was general, of what is not yet wholly dead. Even at the present time, however, there is probably no country in Europe where such a wealth of lore and fancy still governs the daily life of the people, where superstition is so historic and so interesting as it is here; and, in considering the people and their manner of life from this point of view, we may form our own conclusions as to how far the strong analogies between the ancient and the new must be assigned to direct inheritance and consanguinity.

The many nations that have passed through this much-debated land have probably all contributed to enrich the store of custom and legend. As regards the popular tales current everywhere, of which every old wife can tell a great number, their principal student, von Hahn, has laid it down that quite as many of them bear strong analogy to the Germanic folk-story as betray evidence of Oriental infiltration, but that there remains a considerable mass which are easily recognizable as simple popularizations of the Hellenic mythology. Similarly with customs and superstitions; while there are many which are common also to Western and Northern nations, the most

universally prevailing, the most characteristic, as well as the most numerous, are those which preserve, often with but slight modification, an old Hellenic savour. The ubiquity of the Fates and the Nereids, the reappearance of the ferryman of Styx as the grim angel of death, are strong arguments, if a stronger one were needed than the survival of language, against those who have maintained the extermination of the original inhabitants; the more so when we remember that these survivals exist with comparative uniformity in numbers of different centres, between which the rugged mountains have opposed a continual barrier to mutual intercourse.

In quoting the interesting theories of Hahn and others as to the origin of Albanian and Wallach, I am aware that I have touched upon very debatable ground, and that all theories as to the early inhabitants of Italy, Greece, and the Balkans must be received as yet with extreme reserve. Much light may still be thrown upon the nature of that primitive people who once occupied either side of the Adriatic, by the study of the masses of still unexplored prehistoric remains in Italy, where they had probably, owing to more favourable physical conditions, developed contemporaneously a higher civilization than their kinsmen farther east; but at present all is very conjectural, and the data are too slight to enable us to form any satisfactory conclusions.

The following chapters have been the occupation of my leisure during a stay of upwards of two years in Greece. I have not hesitated to avail myself largely of the labours of others, in endeavouring to present, in as popular a form as the subject would admit of, much which they as specialists in various directions had first investigated; but I have always endeavoured by personal experience or interrogatory to test the accuracy of their statements, and have been able to add perhaps some details to the general record. Among the books and treatises to which I am most indebted, I may mention the "Albanesische Studien" of von Hahn; the invaluable little book of Dr. Bernhard Schmidt, of Jena, "Das Volksleben der Neugriechen," and the treatises of M. Politis, of Athens, still unfortunately uncompleted, on the same subject; the notes and introductions to Fauriel's "Chansons Populaires de la Grèce Moderne," and the earlier parts of M. Kamporoglou's History of the Athenians. I owe much to the kindness of friends in Greece in furnishing me with notes and suggestions, and much more to the ready hospitality with which as a traveller I have been welcomed in town and village and monastery throughout the length and breadth of the land. The universal kindliness of the Greeks, from richest to poorest, to the stranger who goes amongst them, and their proud appreciation of the obligations of the host, will

ever be gratefully remembered by those who have experienced it.

It is a matter of regret to me in issuing this volume that before undertaking it I had no better equipment in the knowledge of comparative folk-lore, no special title to enter upon the subject, beyond the attraction which I felt in its intrinsic interest. My object, however, has been mainly to draw attention to an aspect of Greece which it seemed to me had been hitherto rather neglected, by the side of the more absorbing study of the antique, and it will have been accomplished if I have succeeded in showing that stones and sites and inscriptions need not wholly monopolize the energies that are devoted to "Hellenic Studies."

# *The Customs and Lore of Modern Greece.*

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## CHAPTER I.

### ETHNOLOGY OF MODERN GREECE, AND HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE POPULATIONS.

It is usual to describe the population of modern Greece as containing four principal elements; one latent, the Slavonic, and three still apparent to-day, the Greek proper, the Albanian, and the Vlach or Wallach, which exists in a much smaller proportion, and that only in northern Greece. A few families of Latin origin are also to be found, descendants of Genoese or Venetians, and even of the Frankish settlers, mainly confined, however, to the islands, and without ethnological importance, as well as a small number of Jews and gipsies. Of the origin and development of the ancient Hellenic races it would be superfluous to speak, and it is quite beyond the scope of the present work to discuss all the arguments of the learned Fallmerayer, who first advanced the theory that the old inhabitants of the mainland had been wholly replaced by Slavonic populations. His reasoning has since been confuted by many competent authorities, and the most illustrious of these,

Professor Hopf, has finally pronounced that but few traces of Slavonic nationality can be detected in the Hellas of later times.

Probably no race is ever radically exterminated in the country where it has long been established; and the fact that the same language which was written and spoken by the ancient Greeks is still, with certain modifications, the language of the country to-day affords the strongest argument in favour of the historical continuity of a people, whose extraordinary vitality has sufficed to Hellenize beyond recognition the remnants of the Slave element by which it was at one time in danger of being overwhelmed. Had the number of the invaders been sufficient to suppress or oust the former inhabitants, a Slavonic language, or at any rate a Greek dialect largely tinged with Slave, would prevail in Greece to-day. But later and more critical investigators than Fallmerayer[1] have failed to discover that any considerable admixture of Slavonic forms has influenced the language of the modern Greeks; and it rests therefore with those who maintain the substitution theory to prove that such few instances as do occur may not have found their way into the language through the intermediary of Turkish or Albanian, into both of which no lack of Slavonic words have been adopted. The change which has come over the language, the tendency to loss of inflection, the increased dependence on the auxiliary, with the absorption of other similar foreign forms, is not greater than it is easy to account for, and is certainly far less striking than the transition from Latin to the Romance languages. Moreover, there still prevail,

[1] Miklosich, Thiersch, &c.

as in ancient Greece, certain marked varieties of dialect, which point rather to a direct inheritance of traditions than to the artificial reintroduction of the language from Byzantium or elsewhere. There is direct literary evidence for the existence of this language in the Morea as much as 600 years ago, if not earlier. Again, when geographical nomenclature is examined, it is found that there are in the Morea at least ten Hellenic names of places for every one that can be identified as Slavonic; and yet the re-naming of the spots in which they settle is one of the first cares of a conquering race. Once more, it has been observed that herdsmen and husbandmen, the classes among whom the stationary life is perpetuated, employ a greater number of ancient words than are to be found in the language of the townsfolk; and this is the more evident in districts remotest from old centres, in the inaccessible region of Maina, in the mountains of Crete and Naxos, and even in the outlying villages of Corfu, pointing to the fact that the ancient race has lived on in all its purity away from the beaten tracks.

Tradition has claimed, for certain districts in particular, a more direct survival of the Hellenic inhabitants, taking as its point of departure that population which, before the great period of migration, had absorbed and Hellenized its Roman and alien colonists, exhibiting in this country a fairly homogeneous whole, which contrasted with the more mixed races of Asia and Byzantium. The strongest advocates of the Slavonic substitution have generally admitted the freedom from contamination of Patras, Corinth, and the islands of the Ægean Sea. The Mainotes, in their inhospitable mountain promontory, claim to be direct descendants of the

Spartans of old; and there is every probability that they are of the race of the Periœci of Laconia, who occupied the maritime country, while the Spartans proper were for the most part established on the better land in the interior. Their language abounds in Doricisms, and is somewhat akin to that of the Cretan Sphakiotes, who are held to be of Dorian origin. The Tzakonians, who occupy a portion of the western shore of the old Argolic Gulf (Gulf of Nauplia), preserve still more strictly than the Mainotes the characteristics of the Dorian dialect, and their language appears to have but little taint of Slavonic, in spite of the opinion of Hopf, who while otherwise opposing the Fallmerayer theory, is inclined to maintain it in respect of this particular tribe. The name has been held to be a corruption of Laconia, but there is no justification for such a phonetic change, and it appears more probable that it owes its origin to a small Slavonic tribe settling on the borders and subsequently disappearing in the general suppression of the Slaves, their name being ignorantly extended over a whole region where a language prevailed which the rest of the Greeks did not understand.[2] The language is conspicuous for its softness and richness of vocalization, and contains, besides a large number of obvious Doricisms, analogies with the still older epic language, and even betrays evidence of an ante-Hellenic period. Professor Thiersch, the principal student of the language of the Tzakonians, also discovers traces of the

[2] See Dr. A. von Philippson. "Zur Ethnographie des Peloponnes," in Petermann's Mitteilungen. 1890, II.

In corroboration of this view, Stephen Gerlachius, chaplain to the Imperial Ambassador at Constantinople in 1573, speaks of the Tzakones as a people not understood by the rest of the Greeks.

Ionian dialect, which agrees with the statement of Herodotus that the Cynurians who occupied these parts were Ionians.[3] The dialect is unfortunately falling into disuse, and Colonel Leake, early in this century, estimated the Tzakonians as numbering only some fifteen hundred families.

In Attica, again, where Albanians have overrun the whole province, Athens and Megara claim to have remained to a great extent free from contamination. But the population of Athens, which even in the days of Tacitus is described by that author as containing but little of its ancient stock, had within comparatively recent times dwindled to the level of that of a village, and the present inhabitants have come together from many quarters. And this suggests another point which should not be ignored in reviewing the national descent of the modern Greeks; namely, the constant influx of population from the islands, and the tendency of Greeks abroad to return to the land of their origin.

At least, it may be asserted without fear of contradiction, that the Greeks of to-day form a nation of

[3] Thiersch, "Uber die Sprache der Tzakonen." He thus concludes his learned monograph :—"To sum up the result of foregoing observations, it is clear that we have here a language which differs from common Greek, particularly in the structure of the pronouns and the substantive verb, and in the personal inflection of verbs, too widely to admit of its being a dialect of that language; and that this tongue is connected with the modern Greek, the Doric, the Epic, and the ancient Laconic dialects, but that it also diverges from them, and has relations in certain essential forms to a language wherein the *origines* of Greek, Latin, and German are found."

This primitive language, he concludes, was that spoken by the primitive race, which, for want of a better name, we must call Pelasgian, and, as will be seen later on, the Albanian language, identified by Hahn with the Pelasgic, is found by philologists to contain strong Gothic or Germanic tendencies.

considerable homogeneity from the Ionian Islands to the shores of the Black Sea, speaking a common language, exhibiting to those that know them well a conspicuous resemblance in character to the Greeks of antiquity, and still revealing ample evidence of that obstinate nationality, which several times nearly extinguished in its hereditary seat, has nevertheless succeeded in reasserting itself, in overshadowing and absorbing the various elements which had threatened to overwhelm it. And not less remarkable than this uniformity of language and character is the similarity of custom, of lore, and of superstition, of all, in fact, that is most ancient and most national, in portions of the Hellenic kingdom the remotest from one another. The customs of the mainland, which has been represented as wholly re-peopled by Slaves, are closely analogous to those of the islands, which admittedly never were subjected to Slavonic influence, and they recur with but slight variation all over those portions of the Turkish empire where the Greek populations predominate. This uniformity of thought and tradition will frequently come to light in subsequent chapters.

In order to form a fair estimate of what part the Slaves may have played in the modification of the present inhabitants of Greece, it is necessary to give a cursory glance at the scanty materials afforded by history ; and if such a rapid survey be continued through subsequent centuries under the Turkish and Venetian dominations, we shall be able to realize the full measure of that extraordinary vitality which has succeeded in reasserting itself, in spite of all the transformations and vicissitudes though which this land has passed.

The Hellenic populations were undoubtedly in a rapidly diminishing state when the ancient name of Hellene fell into abeyance before the prouder and more influential title of Roman. During the 3rd, 4th, and 5th centuries, Goths, Herulians, and Vandals had passed over the land, and pestilences scarcely less destructive had decimated the inhabitants. Then the laws of Justinian and the progress of Christianity blended the various classes into a uniform whole, by enabling the Christian slave to acquire his freedom with facility ; and we must, at the outset, resign any attempt to speculate how far the population became adulterated by intermixture with freedman and slave. It would appear that at this time also the lands were in the hands of comparatively few proprietors, whose vast possessions fell out of cultivation from a want of sufficient interest to keep communications open ; while it is probable that the Greeks of those days were, as they have ever been, far more disposed to mercantile than agricultural pursuits. The lands which rapidly fell waste passed into the hands of Slavonic invaders, descending from the North, who, perhaps, in many cases occupied them almost without a struggle, as they had already done in Thrace and Illyria, while the Greek population prospered with commerce and manufacture in the towns or under their immediate shelter. It is possible that they found not a few of their kinsmen already working in Greece under Romaic masters, and that the preliminary establishment of many others as serfs facilitated their final advance as enemies.

The first historically recorded invasion of Slaves seems to have been made under the auspices of the

Avars, that mysterious dominant race, against whom their Turkish vassals had arisen, expelling them from their original home in Asia, who, after a singular career of victory, have disappeared entirely from the map of the world. The Avars appear to have employed vast hordes of Slaves as conscripts or allies; much as did another Tartar tribe, the Bulgarians, who, themselves numerically small, were ultimately absorbed by the Slavonic settlements they had conquered, developed, and given their name to. An ecclesiastical writer of the 6th century, Evagrius, whose history is continued down to the year 593, mentions this invasion of Avars, or Slaves and Avars, as having taken place in 588 and 589, adding that they plundered and laid waste the whole of Greece; but there does not seem to be any sufficient evidence of their having remained as settlers in the land.[4] On the other hand, the Patriarch Nicolaos, in a letter written to the Emperor Alexius I. in 1081, when alluding to the famous defeat of the Slaves and Avars before Patras in 807, attributed to the miraculous intervention of St. Andrew the Apostle, asserts that the Avars had at that time held possession of the Peloponnese for 218 years, thus making their domination date from the very year of the invasion alluded to by Evagrius; while he goes on to say that, during this period, no Byzantine official dared to set foot in the country. But this last statement is manifestly false; for the Emperor Constans II., who had already subdued the northern Slavonians, was as near to the Peloponnese as Athens, which he visited in 662, in order to assemble troops on his way

[4] Prof. Hopf denies that any Sclavonic settlers were left in the country after this invasion.

to Italy; and it is justly observed by Finlay[5] that, not only is this casual mention of Athens by Latin writers fair evidence of the tranquil condition of the city and the surrounding country at this time, but that, further, any Slaves there might have been in the neighbourhood must have owned perfect allegiance to the Byzantine Emperor, or he would assuredly have first employed his troops in subduing them.

The letter of the Patriarch may, however, be considered as a confirmation of the statement of Evagrius, that a Slave-Avar invasion took place at the close of the 6th century; and while it is possible that many of the conquerors acquired a permanent domicile in lands where circumstances favoured their settlement, it can by no means be admitted that this establishment was more than partial, and it was certainly not of a kind to exterminate the Greeks, who comparatively soon afterwards turned the tables on them. Had the immigration of the Slaves at this epoch been as universal as the Patriarch describes it to have been, it would scarcely have escaped the notice of a somewhat earlier writer, the Imperial author, Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who, in his work on the provinces of the Empire, describes the continent of Greece as having been subdued and rendered barbarous after the great plague, which took place in the time of Constantine Copronymous,[6] had depopulated large districts; and who, again, in another passage alludes to the Slavonic colonization of the Peloponnese as having taken place in 746, a time when also a number of Greeks, both from

[5] "History of Greece," vol. i., chap. v., § 3.

[6] Reigned 741 to 775.

the islands and the mainland, were transferred to Constantinople to restore the population which the plague had attenuated. Again, in 727 we find the Greeks in rebellion against Leo III., the Isaurian, and Agallianos, the very officer entrusted with the command of forces stationed to watch the Slavonic settlers, placed at the head of an expedition sent to assail the Emperor in his capital. The enterprise and resources of the Greeks, implied by their ability at this time to fit out such an expedition, is another refutation of the Patriarch's assertion.

After the great plague, throughout the middle and latter half of the 8th century, a multitude of Slaves, hard pressed by Bulgars in the north, seem to have descended upon the depopulated lands and gradually to have possessed themselves of the plains. At the same time the Iconoclastic Emperors set themselves the task of repressing them throughout their dominions, and in 783 the Empress Irene sent an army into Greece to reduce to submission all those who had assumed independence. It was, perhaps, these repressive measures, and the necessity of striking a decisive blow for their own existence, which led to the attack on Patras in 807, in the accounts of which the Slaves are again confounded with the Avars. Here, in spite of the concerted action of a Saracen fleet, they were absolutely defeated by the townsmen, who did not wait for the promised assistance of Byzantine troops from Corinth, and were reduced to a state of serfdom and vassalage to the Church of Patras, whose patron saint, St. Andrew, was held to have fought on the side of his former executioners. The Slavonic populations of the

Peloponnese broke out into rebellion once more, somewhat later in the same century, during the reign of the Emperor Theophilus, but were soon reduced to obedience, and the remnant were subjected to tribute and bound by oaths of fealty, which, though often violated, were constantly renewed; and henceforth they gradually lose importance, until, at the time of the Frankish invasion, Slavonic tribes are only found in the district of Mount Taygetus, but north of the Taenarian promontory, where the Mainotes had throughout held their own; in the heights of Elis bordering on the Olympian plain, and in some of the mountains of Arcadia. The limits of their progress in northern Greece it is still more difficult to gauge.

As far, however, as the Peloponnese is concerned, it would seem that the conclusions to be drawn from the scanty evidence at hand are, that, although there had been a gradual infiltration of Slaves into the rural districts for some time previously, the great movement of Slavonic immigration took place in the middle of the 8th century; that they occupied large tracts of country, but by no means the whole of it; and that the menace of their numbers induced the Greeks themselves, with the assistance of the Byzantine Emperors, to take energetic measures to arrest an advance which threatened to overwhelm the native element; that after this revival the Greeks continued to increase numerically throughout the 9th century, while the Slave element was checked and kept under, and finally absorbed and Hellenized, except in the regions above referred to, which it needed several more centuries to assimilate. Up to this point, there-

fore, it seems clear that the Hellenic element remained the preponderating one, if not actually in numbers at any rate in wealth and vitality; while the establishment of the Slaves was never more than partial, and probably confined to particular localities.

This view receives additional weight from the instructive story of Danelis, the widow of Patras, recorded by Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who speaks with tolerable authority, inasmuch as the fortunes of his grandfather and the foundation of the Macedonian dynasty at Byzantium were closely bound up with her early protection of Basil in the days of his obscurity. It is recorded that she had inherited enormous wealth from her husband, that her slaves numbered tens of thousands, while her treasures in gold and silver could scarcely be estimated, and this during the reign of the Emperor Michael III., not fifty years after the eventful battle of Patras. When, many years later, the ambitious intrigues of Basil had placed him on the Imperial throne, Danelis obtained permission to visit him at Constantinople, and travelled thither overland in a litter borne by thirty relays of ten slaves, while the gifts which she took with her are enumerated as consisting of 500 slaves, among whom were 100 eunuchs, of 100 women skilled in embroidery, 100 pieces of embroidered purple, 300 pieces of woven linen of various kinds, and 100 pieces of silk woven as fine as a spider's web, which could be rolled inside the hollow of a cane.[7] It was Danelis again

[7] This fine silk-weaving is one of the few arts still practised in Greece. Gibbon points out that until the 12th century, when the victorious Normans carried off into Italy the weavers of Thebes, Argos, and Corinth, Greece alone of all European countries possessed the silkworm.

who some years later provided the rich carpets destined to cover the floor of a new and magnificent church erected at Constantinople. The nature of these gifts argues a high standard of artistic productiveness in Greece, of luxury and of wealth, which the inroads of barbarous Slaves had not been able to stamp out. The evidence of this story, which is valuable for the almost solitary glimpse which we possess of the internal state of Greece at this period, cannot but be true in the main.[8]

From this period until the invasion of the Normans and the Franks it would seem that Greece remained a flourishing province, whose wealth and productiveness were sufficient to allure those crusading buccaneers. The language and literature of the Greeks, though probably at this very time undergoing its most important modifications, was predominant in the most civilized part of the world; the commerce of the Mediterranean was chiefly in their hands; the land was relatively rich, and found ample markets for its produce; the silk manufacture was a source of abundant wealth; all of which resources were fostered and stimulated by three centuries of comparative quiet. The fusion of the Slavonic settlers with the old inhabitants of the rural districts brought new vigour into the blood;

[8] Finlay (vol. ii., bk. ii., chap. i.) describes Basil as a "Slavonian groom," and is led to conjecture that Danelis was also of Slavonic origin, in order to account for her patronage of him; but the balance of evidence goes to prove that Basil was of Armenian origin, and there is no other reason for assuming Danelis to have been a Slave; indeed, in the light of previous and subsequent events, there is every reason to believe the contrary. Gibbon suggests that it was a very human weakness which brought about an intimacy which the crafty Basil took every advantage of, an explanation in itself more probable than Finlay's suggestion of race-sympathy.

much land that had fallen into neglect was again placed under cultivation, and mountains were laboriously terraced, which the weed-growths have once more invaded to-day. In the towns the closer attachment of the province to the central authority had its effect; Byzantine manners and fashions became popular, and the political and ecclesiastical administrations reflected on a lesser scale the sun of the Eastern capital. There can be but little doubt, though there is but scanty direct evidence, that this was the time at which the nation gradually acquired its new character, and that the Moreots of to-day fairly represent that mixed population of Slave and Greek in the rural districts, and those more cosmopolitan townsmen, whose respective descendants still present the same sharp contrast. Only the Mainotes and the Tzakonians remained isolated and unchanged. This was also, as we might naturally expect, the great era of church-building in Greece, to which belong the greater part of those small Byzantine edifices, which many of them in ruins, and all of them but a poor remnant of their former magnificence in marble and mosaic, are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land. On the otherh and, in spite of this material progress and activity, society seems to have remained in a stationary condition, and there was no corresponding moral advancement. The Byzantine system encouraged privileged classes, and their own local jealousies became more important to the Greeks than the service of the Empire which protected them.

The successful invasion of Greece by Roger, the Norman King of Sicily, in the middle of the 12th

century, dealt a severe blow to the silk industry, for the greater part of the skilled artisans of Thebes and Corinth were transferred by him to Palermo, and there established under the most favourable circumstances. Thebes, it is true, continued for some time to produce the material in considerable quantities; but competition in the world's markets now set in, not only from Sicily, but also from Persia; and in the next century protective laws had to be introduced to keep a dying industry alive. Beyond this removal, however, of the inhabitants of the most flourishing manufacturing centres, this passage of the Normans did not greatly affect the population, nor can the domination of the Franks or Latins, though it lasted between two and three hundred years, and still longer in the islands, be considered to have done so. The Franks were from the outset very few in number; and the feudal barons, established throughout the Morea, must have recruited their little bands of armed retainers largely on the spot. The Greece of that time, with its local jealousies, the selfishness of its privileged classes, and its want of internal organization, was easily kept under control by the scattered outposts of daring soldiers of fortune, which the feudal system of the Franks had organized. During the period of nearly four centuries, through which the Italians, Venetians or Genoese, ruled in the islands of the Archipelago, and the 250 years through which the Frankish princes and their successors were masters of a great part of the continent, the native population here declined in numbers and in national importance, while Western Europe was steadily advancing. Among the islands a long series of bloody

fights between Greeks and Venetians followed on the expulsion of the Latins from Constantinople, and the unfortunate inhabitants, in addition to being plundered of all they possessed, were not unfrequently seized and impressed as rowers in the galleys. The opposing fleets degenerated into mere corsair bands, and the whole sea was filled with marauding craft, who carried out the work of devastation and depopulation, while the Spanish adventurers of Roger de Luria sailed hither for a share in the spoil. The Ottoman invasion followed, and these seas remained a constant battle-field. Knights of Malta, knights of St. Stephen, flotillas from Spain carried on the trade of piracy under cover of a holy war. The commerce of Venice in these waters, and the defencelessness of the Greek coasts, tempted the Barbary corsair from Tunis, Algiers, and Tripoli, the pirate craft of Italy and Dalmatia, while the Turkish admirals carried off the populations of the islands as slaves, and the system which produced the Klephts on the Continent led many of the Greeks themselves to take to piracy at sea. The islands still bear evidence of the struggle for life through which they passed in these days, with their fortress-like villages perched on the steepest rocks for defence, and many of them were for a while totally abandoned when their trees had been burned down, and their olive groves destroyed.

During the two centuries which followed the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople, the Greek nation sank to its lowest ebb in civilization and numbers. The tribute of Christian children was inexorably levied in every village, and a fifth of the male population between the ages of six and nine was regularly carried off to receive a new

*Greek Soldiers.*

religion and nationality. Those who adopted the creed of their conquerers, in order to escape from these indignities, as did a large portion of the inhabitants of Eubœa, and subsequently of Crete, lost their national character, and, becoming Mussulman, practically ceased to be Greek; indeed, from the time of the Ottoman conquest the question of nationality is largely merged in the opposition of creeds. Sultan Mohammed II. appears to have foreseen a safeguard against future insurrection in draining the resources of the country, and literally exhausting its population; and he re-peopled the vanquished Constantinople by transferring to that city the wealthiest inhabitants of the lands he subsequently reduced. Slavery awaited the Venetian subjects of Modon and Nauplia when they fell into his hands in 1463, and a similar fate befell a number of the natives of Eubœa in 1470. The Ionian Islands were called upon to yield their quota to the re-population of Constantinople, and a number of slaves were drawn from Rhodes in 1480. In the last year of the 15th century, and the opening years of the 16th, when the Morea was again the battle-field of Turk and Venetian, the occupants of the plain of Argos and of portions of Attica were practically exterminated, and Albanian colonists began to re-occupy the ruined lands. In the following century the Ottoman admiral, Barbarossa, carried off the female inhabitants of Ægina into slavery, and massacred the males, leaving the island entirely depopulated until it was re-colonized by Albanians. He reduced the majority of the Ægean Islands to subjection, expelled the Italian nobles, and is said to have carried off 30,000 Greeks into slavery. Meanwhile, piracy rendered the coasts

uninhabitable; the olive groves were cut down, and the material of agriculture destroyed. As representative of the Greek nation in Greece, therefore, there only remained the landowners of the rural districts in the interior, and the peasant cultivators living isolated in their separate valleys. Much land fell out of cultivation, consumption was diminished, and the difficulties and insecurity of transport increased. The landowners could no longer avail themselves of the labour of slaves, and were driven to till the land with their own hands; while the profits of pasturage and forest produce were transferred to Turkish feudatories, and all inducement towards a bettering of their condition was removed.

Meanwhile, the deserted lands were gradually occupied by Christian Albanians, moving south before the wave of Turkish advance. Their earliest immigrations are lost in the silence of time, but the first recorded mention of their appearance in Peloponnese occurs in the middle of the 14th century, when Manuel Kantacuzen[9] brought Albanian mercenaries to Mistra, and later established colonies in the peninsula. Again, at the close of the 14th century, in the reign of John Palæologus, some 10,000 of them crossed the Isthmus, and in the latter days of the despots of the Morea they are found serving as mercenaries in their armies. The immigration continued through the 15th century, after the final reduction of Albania by the Turks. They occupied the greater part of Bœotia, Attica, and Megaris, portions of the Corinthian territory, of Argolis and Achaia, as well as small districts

[9] Second son of the Emperor John Kantacuzen, appointed Lord of Mistra by his father in 1348.

in Phocis, Elis, and Arcadia, forcing the remnant of the Greeks into the towns, where they became tradesmen or artisans. They entirely re-peopled the islands of Hydra, Poros, the Spezzas, Psara, Salamis, and Ægina, and, spread over the southern end of Eubœa and the northern section of Andros. In many of their colonies they rapidly assimilated the manners and customs and learned the language of their Greek co-religionists; and adopting the Hellenic ideal, they fought in the van, and bore, indeed, the brunt of the fighting, in the war of regeneration. The process of Hellenization is still going on, and the Albanian language is doomed in Greece; at present it is kept alive by the women, who, speaking no other, teach it to their children, and will continue to do so until the system of primary education for women is more widely extended in the Hellenic kingdom.[1]

There still remains a period during which the population of Greece was once more seriously affected by the ravages of war and pestilence, the period of the Venetian conquest of the Morea at the close of the 17th century. It is calculated that before the commencement of hostilities, the Christian population of

[1] The proportion of the Albanian-speaking population in the Hellenic kingdom at the census of 1879 was as follows:—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Peloponnesus | ... | 90,000 |
| Central Greece | ... | 84,000 |
| Eubœa ... | ... | 40,000 |
| Andros ... | ... | 10,000 |
| Total | ... | 224,000 |

that is to say, upwards of 11 per cent. of the whole population; and it must not be forgotten that, besides these Albanian-speaking people, there are great numbers who have lost their language and speak only Greek, but whose Albanian origin is historically certain.

the peninsula, including Greeks and Albanians, amounted to 250,000, while the Mussulmans represented 50,000 more; whereas, after the Venetians had established themselves, their first census returned considerably less than 100,000, a figure which is, however, probably too low, as, early in the 18th century, under the increased security of Venetian rule, these figures are more than doubled. The Venetians, moreover, induced many thousands of families from Northern Greece to migrate to the Peloponnese, and assist in restoring the ravages of the plague. The subsequent re-establishment of the Ottoman rule was accomplished with remarkable facility and without similar sufferings on the part of the native populations. The final revolution served to blend the Greek and Albanian elements more closely together, and brought about the withdrawal of the Mussulman minority; and the national regeneration stimulated the increase of population and the return to the parent country of many thousands of Greeks from other parts of the Ottoman dominions.

Such is a hasty and too rapid survey of the vicissitudes through which the Greek populations of this land have passed. The salient feature is the rapid recovery from what seemed almost extermination of that vigorous nationality which reasserts itself after every blow, absorbing, and assimilating, and stamping with its own unmistakable impress all the heterogeneous elements that may have accrued to it. The inevitable conclusion which we must draw is that, in all its repeated disasters, a far larger remnant of the original stock must have survived and preserved its vital characteristics than one would be led to suppose by dwelling on the details of

conquest and re-conquest, of periodical devastations and re-populations; and those who are familiar with the present inhabitants, and with the life and story of antiquity, will hardly fail to subscribe to the opinion of Mr. Finlay, the historian of mediæval and modern Greece, who, after tracing all its vicissitudes, has, like Professor Hopf, definitely decided in favour of this view, and emphatically states, "No historical facts seem more evident than that the modern Greeks are a modification of the ancient Achaian, Dorian, Ionian, Æolian, and Hellenic population."[2]

The Albanians, formerly better known under the name of Arnauts, whose colonies have contributed nearly a fifth part to the population of modern Greece, are a distinct race among the families of Europe. Their language, though resembling in its system of inflections the Greek and Latin languages, stands by itself, and is an independent offshoot of equal or greater antiquity from the primitive Aryan language.[3] Their native mountains are poor and unproductive, and they travel far in search

[2] Finlay, Hist., vol. iii., book iii., chap. iii., &c.

[3] The philologist, Franz Bopp, working on the details supplied by von Hahn, has shown it to be an offshoot from the primitive Aryan language, from which Sanskrit also was derived. Hahn and others have dwelt on certain points which it has in common with the Germanic or North European languages. Cp. Thiersch's observations on the Tzakonian language, in Note on p. 5, Leake considered the Gothic element in Albanian might, perhaps, be accounted for by the passage of Alaric and Gothic settlements. It also contains many Greek words, some of which are from the Romaic, and others apparently absorbed before the deterioration of the language; a larger proportion of Latin words, but not as many as might be expected in view of the constant communication with Italy, and the presence of the Franks about these coasts over a number of years; and a number of Slavonic words; but in view of the conquest and occupation of Albania by Slaves, and of their presence still on its northern and eastern frontier, the proportion is comparatively small.

of work, while some of them constitute a permanently nomad population. Nevertheless, they are passionately devoted to their country, and have displayed the most devoted courage in its defence throughout their history. Circumstance and inclination have made them a race of soldiers, and the energies which they devoted to the defence of their country have also been displayed in continual petty warfare among themselves or in mercenary service abroad. They are keen and enterprising in action, if relentless in vengeance, and they exhibit the most devoted fidelity to those to whom their faith is pledged.

"Their wrath how deadly, but their friendship sure."

Their children are early trained to the use of arms, and even the women are skilful with the gun; while they excel in activity, endurance, keenness of sight and all the qualities of the warrior-mountaineer. Agriculture, on the other hand, is less popular among them, and the more fertile districts of Albania are largely cultivated by Vlachs and Bulgarians; while the native population, for the most part, follow the vocation of herdsman or shepherd, bearing out the observation of Gibbon that, "The pastoral manners which have been adorned with the fairest attributes of peace and innocence are much better adapted to the fierce and cruel habits of a military life."

The physical type is not an unpleasing one; the eyes are light and often blue, the nose is straight and high, the cheekbone inclined to be prominent, and the face generally open, with a fair and healthy complexion. But the type varies considerably, and different travellers have gathered the most contradictory impressions.

Their costume is notoriously picturesque. The Southern Albanians, for the most part, wear the white kilt or fustanella, embroidered jacket and gaiters, and shoes with upturned pointed toes, a dress which was adopted throughout Greece at the time of the revolution as the national costume, and which replaced the loose blue or brown knickerbockers still retained by the islanders. A picturesque but fanciful legend records that this dress derives its origin from the tunic skirt of the Roman soldier, a colony of Prætorian guards having been established here in the time of Septimus Severus. In northern Albania there are many dresses varying with the locality; close-fitting crimson trousers, or trousers of coarse white wool, tight from the knee down, and loose above, with broad black seams, replace the fustanella, and often a little white skull-cap is worn in place of the fez. Heavy white woollen hooded cloaks, or cloaks of thick goat's hair, impenetrable to rain, are the covering by day and the bed by night of the mountain shepherd. The sleeves and fronts of the women's jackets are covered with beautiful embroidery, as well as their long sleeveless coats, reaching to the knee, while head-dresses of coins testify the amount of the young women's dowries.

A great part of Albania is inhabited exclusively by Mussulmans; in other districts again, especially in the south, Christians only are found. A mixture of religions is rarer, but, generally speaking, the predominant and aristocratic elements have embraced the Mohammedan creed, which has, however, now ceased to make progress. The Miridites in the north, one of the most warlike tribes, who claim to be descended from the followers

of Skanderbeg, have maintained the Catholic religion, which they had adopted before the Turkish invasion, and have rigorously expelled from their midst all who went over to the Mussulman faith.

The country now included under the general name of Albania is co-extensive with ancient Epirus and a part of Illyria. The name Albania, adopted by the Italians—who were in the middle ages to the populations of the eastern Adriatic much what the Greeks were to the Slaves with whom they came into contact, the superior race in arts and civilization—and through them by the rest of Europe, is apparently derived from an insignificant tribe mentioned by the geographer Ptolemy, as occupying a town called Albanopolis. This town, under the form of Albanon, reappears as the centre of a prefecture in the 13th century, under despots of Epirus, the Albani having in the meantime acquired sufficient importance for other nations to apply the name to the whole surrounding country. The present inhabitants, however, speak of their country as Skyperi, and of themselves as Skypetars, a name which appears to mean "dwellers in the crags," being also applied by them to the mountain eagle.

Herr von Hahn, the eminent student of the Albanian people and their language, distinguishes two main stocks among them; the Gueg or Ngeg, occupying central and northern Albania, and the Tosk in the south. Their language reveals two dialects of the same tongue, differing from one another in somewhat the same measure as High from Low German. There is complete separation and considerable rivalry between the two branches. These two broad divisions are,

however, not acknowledged by the Albanians themselves, though the Guegs describe all the southern tribes as Tosks. Colonel Leake divides the southern Albanians into three principal groups: the Tosks proper, whose chief settlement is Berat and whose port is Avlona; the Liapé, Liapids[4] or Iapids, whose name recalls Iapygia, the country about Mount Gargano on the other side of the Adriatic, and who occupy the district south of Toskeria as far as Delvino; and thirdly, the Tzamé, Tchamides, Shumiks or Tzamourians, as the Greeks call them, the most famous tribe in recent history, who extend inland as far as Jannina and southward to the Gulf of Arta, and among whose chief settlements were Suli, Paramithia, and Parga. This fourfold division of the Skypetars into Guegs, Tosks, Liapids, and Tchamides has been generally adopted by more recent writers. In southern Albania there is a large Greek element, much Greek is spoken, and in the region immediately north of the Gulf of Arta, Greeks are probably considerably more numerous than Albanians. In central Albania there are few or none, but a mixed population of Vlachs and Bulgars occupy the shores of Lake Ochris, and to the extreme north a number of Serbs are settled within the limits of Albania proper, The colonists in Greece belong to the southern group, and only a very small proportion of them ever professed the Mussulman creed.

It would be beyond the scope of the subject in hand to describe at length the internal economy of this curious

[4] The name of Liapid, which has come to be a term of reproach among their neighbours since the days when they served under the flag of Ali Pacha, is repudiated by this tribe, who prefer to call themselves Arvans.

and interesting people,[5] since those that have found a home in Greece have for the most part adopted the Greek mode of life, and abandoned the patriarchal institutions of their native land. A glance, however, at the theories which have been suggested as to their origin may assist us to realize why it has been so easy for them to be assimilated by the Greeks, and how it has come about, as will from time to time be pointed out in the following pages, that so many of their customs and superstitions are identical with those of their adopted country.

Pouqueville, the author of travels in Greece and Albania, who resided many years at Jannina as French Consul-general, is inclined to trace their origin to Caucasia, where he asserts there might be found in Mingrelia a tribe calling themselves Toxides ; while he quotes Pliny as an authority for Colchinium, the modern Dulcigno, being a colony from Colchis. He would identify Skypetar with Scythian, and quotes a sentence from Magius Patavinus to the effect that Albania took its name from the Albans, an Asiatic people, who were driven from their homes by the Tartars.[6] But he does not go very deeply into the matter, nor is his reasoning much more scientific than that of the learned Paduan himself.

The principal authority on the language and ethnology of this people is von Hahn,[7] for many years Consul-

[5] Some account of the Suliotes and their institutions will be found in chap. x.

[6] "Albania dicitur ab Albanis, populis asiaticis, qui a Tartaris expulsi istic consederunt."

[7] v. Hahn. "Albanesische Studien."

general for Germany at various Eastern posts, who, during his long residence in Albania, brought the German critical method to bear on the large store of evidence he was able to collect; and in so doing develops a curious and interesting theory, which, though he may have pushed it rather far in application, is still generally admitted to be, to a considerable extent at any rate, warranted by the arguments he adduces.

The first question that arises is whether or no the Albanians may be considered as autochthonous, the word being, of course, used in a conventional sense, that is to say, are they, as far as we know, or have material for conjecture, the earliest inhabitants of the country? Albania comes to light but seldom in ancient history, in fact, mention is made of it but twice from the days of Ptolemy, who speaks of the Albani, to the period of the Norman invasion. At the latter epoch a great part, if not the whole, of Albania is included in the confines of Bulgaria, and such geographical names within its limits as are mentioned by mediæval historians have a Slavonic form. Nevertheless, when the country reappears in history, it is represented as being inhabited by a people who do not speak Slavonic, who are known as Albanians, and who throughout several centuries send out colonies in various directions. At the present time, with the exception of a certain number of Slavonic words adopted into the language, the Slave element, for the predominance of which at one period there is ample evidence, has disappeared even more completely than in Greece. If, then, Slaves occupied Albania after the great Slavonic invasion, and whether by subsequent expulsion or absorption eventually disappeared among

a people of different race who now occupy the land, two alternatives arise: either the Albanians are the first inhabitants of the country, and the Slavonic domination is a mere episode in their history; or, like the Slaves themselves, they must have entered these regions subsequently, and therefore within historic times. But there is no evidence of any great immigration in this direction, except the Slavonic one; therefore, since the Albanians are not Slaves, and present no close relationship with any known people, they must be assumed to be the descendants of the pre-Slavonic inhabitants of the country.

He then endeavours to establish that the Albanians are the representatives of the ancient Illyrians and Epirots. He finds the same sharp distinction existing in modern times between the Guegs and the Tosks, divided by the river Schkumb, which Strabo noted as existing between Illyria and Epirot in classic times, the former looking to Monastir, the latter looking south, and either mutually turning the back on the other. The divergence between the two Albanian dialects he considers to have been prehistoric, and he assumes that their inter-relations have undergone no change, and that though the Epirots were originally of a common stock with the Illyrians, they had lost all feeling of kinship, and stood to one another much in the same relation as the Danes or the Dutch stand to the Germans to-day.

Illyrians, Epirots, and Macedonians he looks upon as offshoots of a common race, branches of which were also to be found in Italy and in Thrace, and considers this race to have been identical with that known to the

ancients as Pelasgian. The name Pelasgian has been much abused, and it must not be looked upon as indicating a particular nationality, but merely as an expression, sanctioned by antiquity, to denote the people inhabiting Greece and a part of the Balkan peninsula before the Ionian and Dorian immigrations. The question of interest is whether this primitive people were of a kindred and Aryan stock less advanced in arts and civilization, or whether they belonged to a different family altogether. Strabo, Plutarch, Apollodorus, and Stephanus of Byzantium may be quoted in illustration of this Pelasgic origin of Epirots and Macedonians, and the speech of the Argive king in the suppliants of Æschylus, the great dramatist of popular myth, includes the area of Macedonia, which the Greeks evidently did not regard as Hellenic, among the lands under the overlordship of the eponymous king, Pelasgos; while, according to Aristotle, the Bottiæans derived their origin from Athens, an early Pelasgian centre. The language of this primitive people was apparently extinct in Greece proper at the time of Herodotus, he was therefore not in a position to record whether the first inhabitants of the country, whom he describes as Pelasgians, were a people speaking a tongue in any way resembling that of the Epirots.[8]

He discovers among the customs of the Albanians

[8] His observations on the language are not very clear. But in those unphilological days it is not strange that he should have called a language belonging to the same family as Greek "a Barbarian tongue," as he does the language spoken at Kreston and on the Hellespont, which he describes as Pelasgian. Any language which an ordinary Greek could not understand he called Barbarian.

analogies so remarkable to those of the Greeks and Romans as to preclude the idea of their being accidental, and the conclusion he draws is that these point to a common origin for all. The analogies are too close and too detailed to be traced back to a prehistoric unity before the great "Volkerwanderung." Then turning to the evidence of etymology, he traces the analogy between the roots existing in the present Albanian language and the nomenclature and attributes of the oldest Greek theology, which Herodotus avers the Hellenes owed to the people he calls Pelasgians; and he further shows how the names of tribes and of places of the remotest antiquity still survive in the spoken tongue. Again, the relations of this primitive people to the ancient Hellenes find a close and interesting parallel in the actual relations of the Albanians with the Greeks of to-day in the same geographical area. In modern times the Albanian element has merged into the Greek, very much as in ancient days the prior occupants were absorbed and dominated by it. In old Arcadia there appears to have been little or no infiltration of Hellenes among the original inhabitants; nevertheless, these, surrounded by Hellenes, gradually adopted the manners and language, and, in fact, the nationality, of the latter. Similarly, the Albanian immigrants into the Morea and the islands for a time lived side by side with the Greeks, a distinct people, speaking a different tongue; the Greek revolution broke the ice, and the Hellenizing of the Albanians set in with such vigour that it is probable that in a few generations the Skyp language will have died out within the confines of Greece proper; for the Albanian does not

acquire a mixed dialect compounded of the two languages, he speaks both, and eventually deliberately abandons his own.

To sum up his theory, then, it is that the Balkan and Italian peninsulas were, in prehistoric ages, inhabited by kindred Aryan races;[9] that the Hellenes—a later wave of immigration belonging to the same stock—arrived in a Greece peopled by this race, whom they called Pelasgians, and gradually imposed on them their language, which was already a finished and perfected organ of speech; but that the more northern tribes of this family retained their original idiom till the Bulgars overran Macedonia, and the Serbs, Illyria; that Albania was also traversed by Goths, Serbs, and Bulgars, but that the original inhabitants prevailed in the long-run against the new-comers, retained their language until this day, and have survived, tolerably free from alien immixture, the representatives, through Illyrians and Epirots, of the primitive Aryan occupants of the land.[1]

Later writers have adopted the conclusions of Hahn so far as to identify the Albanians with the Illyrians, and this view is now practically unquestioned;[2] it is borne out by a number of customs noted by Strabo, and other

[9] This race, he believes, also spread over the Asiatic side of the Archipelago, where the Argive and Macedonian (Pelasgic) name of Larissa occurs three times, while the Asiatic Ilion reappears twice in Epirus.

[1] Herodotus describes the Ionians as having been themselves Pelasgians, gradually differentiated from other Pelasgian tribes, whereas the Dorians were always Hellenes; which might be interpreted, since the Dorians and Ionians were obviously nearly related, to indicate three successive waves of immigration by kindred peoples, all tracable to a common stock.

[2] The Byzantine historian, Pachymer, speaks of the Albanians indifferently as Albanians or Illyrians, while Nichephorus Gregoras always calls them Illyrians.

writers of antiquity, as peculiar to the Illyrians, which the Albanians still keep up, such as the tattooing of the body, and the cutting the hair away from the forehead, while they constantly display the turbulent spirit, the love of fighting, the intractability of that sturdy race which gave the Romans so much trouble. On the other hand, in view of the fact that the ancients drew a marked line of distinction between Epirots and Illyrians, whom they regarded as separate nations, whereas the Albanians are manifestly one people, with varying dialects of one language, it is now generally assumed that the Illyrians were driven southwards by the pressure of Slavonic conquest, that they swallowed up the Epirots, extinguished their language, and occupied districts to which they had originally no claim; a view which receives confirmation from the fact that the Liapids or Iapids, now a tribe of the southern Albanians, must be assumed to bear the name of the ancient Iapodes, who were originally settled much farther north, near Istria and the Julian Alps, and whose district became the Iapydia of Illyris Romana. Again, the theory has recently been advanced that the Pelasgians, or whatever we are to call the prehistoric occupants of these countries, were an *archaian* race, a white people non-Aryan and non-Semitic, perhaps connected with the founders of the Chaldæan and Egyptian civilizations, and that the Illyrians were a mixed race of this archaian people with Aryan Thracians. The Albanians, therefore, their present representatives, are described as an archaian Aryan people.[3] The Ionans and Dorians

[3] Mr. Stuart Glennie. Introduction to Miss Garnett's "Women of Turkey," 1890.

were undoubtedly of Thracian origin, so that this theory would equally well account for the easy fusion of the Hellenic race with the former occupants. At the same time, if it be true that the Tzakonian language shows traces of an old parent tongue, containing the origins of Greek, Latin, and German, immeasurably older than any history we possess,[4] and if Albanian also be correctly described by philologists as an offshoot from the primitive Aryan language, from which Sanskrit was derived, while it is also found to contain forms analogous to the northern European languages, as well as the roots of many names identifiable as Pelasgian appellations, it will require considerable proof to establish the fact that the people described by Herodotus as Pelasgians, in the midst of whom the Ionians arose, were not essentially an Aryan race.

The ancient civilization of Epirus, which had enjoyed all the benefits of the Roman provincial administration, with its system of high roads and aqueducts, its flourishing cities and development of local interests, was first annihilated by the Goths at the close of the 4th century, when Alaric was driven back thither by Stilicho, after his attempt to establish himself in the Peloponnese, and the campaign in which the temple of Eleusis was plundered and overthrown. In the ensuing compromise he became Master-general of Eastern Illyricum, and the countries which he had ravaged never recovered the prosperous condition in which he had found them. Throughout the 7th, 8th, and 9th centuries Slavonians, chiefly under the name of Bulgarians, overran these provinces of the Empire, descending into

[4] See note on p. 5.

Greece and the Morea. In the 7th century northern Albania became a Servian province, and did not succeed in tearing itself away from that allegiance until the 14th. It would appear that during the 10th century all the more accessible parts of Epirus were occupied by Slaves, while the original inhabitants were driven into the mountain strongholds, and Achris, the ancient Lechidnus, was the residence of a Bulgarian king.[5] Early in the 11th century the Emperor Basil II. destroyed the First Bulgarian Kingdom, and the Eastern Empire appears by that time to have generally repressed the Slavonian colonists of her European dependencies; And soon after this, for the first time since the days of Ptolemy, the name of Albanians (Arvanitai) reappears in history.[6]

After the Franko-Venetian conquest of Constantinople in 1204, and the disruption of the Byzantine Empire, Epirus, Akarnania, and Ætolia formed a separate state, known as the Despotate of Epirus, founded by a bastard of the Comneni, who did homage for this portion of the Empire to the Republic of Venice. The Despotate continued in a precarious existence, with varying fortunes and boundaries, until these countries fell under the Ottoman yoke. During this time the tribal name of Albanian was gradually extended to all the inhabitants of southern Illyria and Epirus; while the native populations, long banished to the

[5] By this time the distinction between Bulgarian and Slave had practically disappeared, though the two languages seemed to have been distinct up to the 8th century. In the Second Bulgarian Kingdom (1116) the Bulgarian language was extinct.

[6] Anna Comnena speaks of *Arvanoi* (book iv. 8), *Arvanitia* (book vi. 7), and of *Arvanon* (book xiii. 5).

mountains, expanded once more, and so grew in numbers and importance, that among the honorary titles granted by the despot Nichephorus to his son-in-law, Philip, Duke of Taranto, we find that of Lord of Albania. During the 14th century the Albanians continued at one time submissive and at another in rebellion against the Palaeologi and the restored Byzantine system, issuing from the mountains, which they had always retained, to make successful raids on Jannina, Arta, or Durazzo, and penetrating into Thessaly, Akarnania, and Macedonia. The historian Chalcondylas records that, in 1400, Charles Tocco, created despot by Manuel Palaeologus, took Epirus and Akarnania from the Albanians, which indicates that they must for some time have overshadowed, and finally usurped, a considerable portion of the Despotate, which was probably always to a great extent a nominal sovereignty.

It was at the close of the 14th century that they first came into conflict with the Turks, into whose hands some of their towns at this time fell, while others were secured by the Venetians. Then followed the long and heroic struggle made against the Turkish invaders by the Albanians, now awakened to a sense of nationality and mutual reliance, under Arianitis and his famous son-in-law, Kastrioti, better known as Skanderbeg. The capitulation of Skodra in 1478 concluded this eventful war, and the defenders of the last stronghold that had held out against Mahomet II. were allowed to take refuge in Venetian territory, after one of the most memorable sieges in history.

About this time considerable numbers of Albanians flying from the victorious Turks, passed over into

Apulia, and founded colonies in Italy and Sicily, where Ferdinand I. of Naples granted several fiefs to the settlers in return for assistance formerly received from Kastrioti. Their presence in the Morea as mercenaries of the later Frankish princes has already been alluded to, and large bodies of them left their own barren mountains at various times to take service abroad in the army of any prince willing to employ them. Henry IV. of France engaged Albanian mercenaries; they were found in the bodyguards of Barbary sultans and Eastern magnates, and to this day they are used as kavasses by the foreign residents in Ottoman dominions. They all live in hopes of some day returning to their own country; and if death overtakes them abroad, their bones are frequently brought back by the care of a friend to repose in their native mountains.

The history of the Albanians presents many analogies to that of the Greeks; in either case we see a vigorous nationality surviving a long series of disasters and defeats, gradually recovering and finally ousting the alien element. When, however, the two nationalities come into contact, the Greek, which had, perhaps, in the dim past absorbed a kindred race, asserts itself as the dominant once more.

The Albanians who embraced the Mohammedan creed became as fanatical as the proverbial convert in their hostility to the old religion, without, at the same time, becoming good Mussulmans; and it was probably as much due to the ensuing dissensions among themselves as to the oppression of their masters, that such large bodies of Christians moved south to occupy

the waste lands of Greece. The settlers in the Morea are the most ancient, for there the Albanian tongue is dying fast. The Hellenic revolution stimulated the work of fusion; the men of Suli, who spoke the Greek language, are celebrated in popular song as national heroes; the islanders of Hydra and Spezza, who bore off the honours of war, would to-day resent any other name than Hellenes;[7] and the more prominent island families, who have migrated to Athens and identified themselves with the government of the young country, have long ceased to teach their children to speak the old Skyp tongue.

It remains to say a few words about the Vlachs or Wallachs, who contribute a small proportion to the population, but exclusively in central and northern Greece. Permanent settlements of this people in Greece proper are onlv to be found in the ranges of Pindus and Olympus; but they wander with their flocks from pasture to pasture, and their reputation for the management and breeding of sheep and goats is so great that they are frequently hired for this purpose by Greek proprietors. In fact, the word Vlach (*Βλάχος*) has come to be synonymous with shepherd in modern Greek, and so is even applied to the Greek or Albanian herdsmen in the Morea.

The name Vlach or Wallach would appear to be the same as that employed by the Germanic races to signify "foreign," which, passing from the Germans to the Slaves, was used by them to describe people of a different race settled in their neighbourhood. The

[7] At the same time, it must be remembered that the name Hellene is a comparatively modern revival. See p. 172.

Welsch of the Germans, applied to the Romans or Italians was similarly used by the Saxons in England for the Celts of Wales, reappearing as *Walloon* in Belgium, and *Wloch* in Poland. Similarly, the Hungarians called the Italians *Olach*, and the inhabitants of Wallachia *Oulach;* these terms, as will be illustrated by what follows, having about the same differentiation as *Roman* and *Rouman.* The name is not recognized by the people themselves, nor did it exist among the Roumanians until the creation of the Wallachian principality, the inhabitants of that region being known amongst themselves as the folk of the mountains, in contradistinction to the folk of the plains in Moldavia, while their common name for themselves, as well as for their kinsmen in Greece and Macedonia, is Roumouni. The Turks and Albanians call the Vlachs of Greece *Tzubán*, a word signifying shepherd. The Greeks distinguish the inhabitants of Wallachia proper by the name of Black Vlachs (*Μαυρόβλαχοι*) from those of Thessaly and Macedonia, whom they call Lame Vlachs (*Κουτζόβλαχοι*), the latter name being probably derived from an apparent lameness of speech, which is also implied in another appellation *Tsintsar*, bestowed on them owing to their inability to pronounce *ch*, which they render by *ts*.[8] The proper Greek name, however, for these and similar tribes between northern Greece and the Danube is Moeso-Dacians (*Μοισιόδακες*), a name which contributes important evidence to the investigation of their historical origin.

[8] The word "koutso" will, however, bear the meaning of "cut off," "divided," and may therefore be interpreted as having its origin in their separation from the larger population of Wallachia proper, and I have heard this explanation given in Greece.

Already in the time of Anna Comnena[9] they were distinguished as a nomad shepherd race, and Pachymer[1] alludes to their skill in the chase, and the martial habits which their mode of life had developed. They appear in the 12th century to have occupied the same regions north and south of the Danube, which as Wallachs in Roumania, and as Vlachs in Macedonia, Thessaly, or Epirus, they still occupy; but the Turkish invasion drove the southern group from the plains to the mountains, and the two divisions, which seem for a long time to have maintained a connecting link through possessions in Mount Rhodope, are now geographically completely separated. The southern group must at one time have been far more numerous in these parts than at the present day, for historians of the later Empire speak of Great Vlachia[2] as including all the mountainous parts of Thessaly; while the Jewish traveller, Benjamin of Tudela, mentions that he entered their country three days' journey north of Thebes, which would imply that it extended to the southern boundaries of Thessaly. They were, however, apparently a distinct tribe from the White Wallachians of the Balkans, who occupied a great part of the present Bulgaria, and who, revolting from the Empire in the reign of Isaac II., founded the Wallachian or Second Bulgarian Kingdom. Byzantine historians also distinguish between Black Wallachians

[9] Anna Comnena, "Alexias," book viii., chap. 3.

[1] Pachymer, "History of Andronicus," book i., chap. 37. They were at this time apparently numerous in the vicinity of Constantinople, and fears were entertained of their making common cause with the Scythians.

[2] For this name Colonel Leake suggests the analogy of "Magna Graecia" as applied to southern Italy; but Mr. Tozer shows, with more correctness, that it was opposed to Lesser Vlachia in Ætolia and Akarnania.

occupying the present Moldavia, and Hungaro-Wallachians, who inhabited the Wallachia of to-day, as well as between Great Vlachia and Lesser Vlachia, which seems to have included a part, at any rate, of Ætolia and Akarnania.

In the latter province of modern Greece is still found a very individual and characteristic shepherd population belonging to this family. They are known as *Karagounides*, or Black Cloaks;[3] they speak the Latinic form of the Wallach language, and present quite a different type to the Koutsovlach and Vlachs of Pindus. The latter division own pleasant villages grouped in the lower ranges, and enjoy considerable material prosperity secured by their unceasing industry. At the time of the Turkish invasion they took up positions in the mountains, which enabled them to obtain favourable terms and guarantee themselves against fiscal extortion; at the same time, the soil about their settlements is so unproductive that it barely furnishes sufficient for a few months' annual consumption, and the greater number of the people are forced to seek employment abroad. The poorer people become shepherds, carriers, or muleteers; others, again, manufacture the thick coarse frieze material from which the cloak or capote of the peasant is made; while the more skilled among them are the principal makers of the rough jewellery so much in vogue among Greeks and Albanians, and excel in the chasing of silver. They are also fair architects, and have a reputation for the construction of cupolas. Others, again, go out

[3] This appellation is also found in Thessaly, where it is applied to the shepherds who come down into the plains. But it is a mere coincidence derived from a similarity of costume, and is not due to any tribal connection.

as artisans or shopkeepers, and they are found as proprietors of khans and caravanserais throughout the East. The richer classes become merchants in various parts of Europe; but, nevertheless, like their humbler kinsmen, they return eventually with their gains to their native villages. Women, for the most part, cultivate the land and tend the gardens, besides spinning the thread and weaving the linen required for domestic uses. It has been noticed that Vlachs in Greece speak a purer and older form of Greek than even the Greeks themselves, which is probably due to the fact that it has always remained a foreign language to them, which is taught to successive generations as it was originally learned.

The geographical link between the Vlachs south of the Danube and the Wallachians north of that river has entirely disappeared, but the difference in language between them is but slight. The construction and syntax of this language, as well as the larger proportion of its vocabulary, are such as to have convinced many students that it is a lineal descendant from the Latin. The tradition of Roman descent is, moreover, universally maintained by the various Wallachian tribes. Those north of the Danube claim to be descended from the military colonies planted in Dacia by the Emperor Trajan in 106; while a tradition is also found among the nomads of Megalovlachia that they owe their origin to the scattered remnants of Pompey's army defeated at Pharsalia.[4] Their Roman or Italian descent was never doubted by the Byzantine historians; and Pope Pius II., accepting this theory with the

[4] Pouqueville.

facile etymological talent of an unscientific scholar, derives the name of Vlachs from Flaccus, a Roman general, quoting the lines of Ovid:

> "Praefuit his, Graecine, locis modo Flaccus, et illo
> Ripa ferox Istri sub duce tuta fuit."[5]

The view of recent students is that the Vlachs mainly represent what is now left of the ancient Thracian race, their language being really the old Thracian speech greatly modified by the intermixture of Latin during the Roman occupation; and thus much of the myth and custom which the Roumans appear to have inherited from the period of this occupation may in reality be much more ancient, and may date from an epoch before the dispersion of the Western Aryans.[6]

The question of the origin and migrations of the Wallachian people has been exhaustively treated by M. Robert Roesler,[7] and his conclusions, though they may not be altogether acceptable to those to whom their Roman descent is a matter of national honour, are certainly well supported by the weight of historical probability. He first endeavours to show that the borderers on the Danube, previous to the Roman conquest of Dacia, were of a kindred stock, allied to, and sprung from, the Thracian people. Dacia was finally subdued in 106 by Trajan, and converted into an Imperial province; but the populations remained hostile, and the Roman system did not apparently strike

[5] Ovid, "Epist. ex Ponto IX.," 75.

[6] Professor Thunmann, "Untersuchungen über Geschichte der östlichen Europäischen Volker. Prof. Freeman, "Historical Geography." Mr. Stewart Glennie, &c.

[7] Roesler, "Romänische Studien," Leipzig, 1871.

deep roots, so that the province was little better than a camp in a foreign land. Then came the pressure of the Goths from the north, gradually forcing the Romans out of Dacia, which was finally evacuated under Aurelian. Fresh seats were found for the army, the provincials, and all who moved in their train, in the securer territory on the southern bank of the Danube, where a portion of Moesia was occupied by them and re-named Dacia Ripensis, which also was officially defined as a province under Diocletian. The evacuation of Dacia proper was complete; the culture which had spread there for upwards of 150 years was wiped out; and from the end of the 3rd to the 6th century the country was re-peopled with folk of Germanic origin. The old Dacian name was maintained in the Thracian peninsula from which, according to his theory, it had originally sprung, but it was borne and cherished by the very Roman provincials who had eliminated it from the names of nations. The Roman settlers then mingled with the inhabitants of Moesia and Thrace, who secured the advantages of the Roman provincial system. Meanwhile, the ancient Dacia was occupied by many tribes in succession—Goths and Vandals fought for it; the Huns followed and drove the Gothic tribes across the Danube; the Langobards and the Avars occupied for a while in turn; and then the great Slavonic movement ensued. Not only the old province of Dacia was overrun, but Moesia also, and New Dacia and Thrace; and then it was that the Roumans, or Romanized Thracians, took to the inaccessible mountains for refuge, and became, for the most part, a nomad shepherd population.

He therefore concludes that the present inhabitants of Roumania re-migrated northwards sometime not long before the 13th century from Moesia, bringing back with them a certain number of Greek and Albanian words acquired from their contact with these peoples, which they would never have adopted had they been all along resident north of the Danube, as they pretend. The Vlachs of Macedonia, Thessaly, and Epirus represent a southward migration from Moesia; the original starting-point of all these movements being the Roman province of Aurelia Dacia or Dacia Ripensis. In their re-migration northwards, the Roumans must still have found considerable Slavonic settlements established in the better lands of ancient Dacia; there is, therefore, probably an important Slave element latent in the Roumanian people; and if the foregoing assumptions are true, we have here once more the same phenomenon which we have already observed in Greece and Albania—that of Slaves—once firmly established at the expense of the former inhabitants, gradually merging in and disappearing before the older nationality, which reasserts its supremacy in the long lapse of time.

There can be no doubt that traditions and historical references dating back to the 12th and 13th centuries concerning the Roman origin of the Wallachians, analogies of manners and customs, and a similarity of language subject to certain definite changes and modifications, all point to some original connection with Rome; and it is easily conceivable that the latter colonists may have readily mingled with the remnants of a Thracian people speaking a somewhat kindred language,

and possessing a mythology and a folk-lore, which though already considerably differentiated, was still derived from a common source, and therefore capable of receiving the new forms which the dominant caste imposed; that the pride and power of the Roman name made it the ambition of all to claim a common origin with the colonists, with whom they gradually became associated, and that so arose a race with many of the characteristics of the Roman people, whose interest and pride it would be to emphasize their distinctness from Illyrian and Slavonic neighbours; that later they dispersed in the general movement which modified the geographical divisions of the Balkan peninsula, so that some going north across the Danube became the Roumanian people, while others drifting south occupied the securer mountains, and became the Vlachs or southern Wallachs, while a broad Slavonic band separated the two divisions.

The Vlachs of Greece, and even of Macedonia, though an interesting and meritorious factor in the population, are, however, not sufficiently numerous to influence the present or future conditions of these countries; and this brief notice of their characteristics and possible origin is only necessary because an ethnological examination of the populations of modern Greece would be incomplete without it.

# CHAPTER II.

## THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE.

OUT of 2,000,000 and more of souls by whom the kingdom of Greece, with its adjacent islands, is occupied, upwards of forty per cent. are engaged in agricultural pursuits, while nearly ten per cent. more follow the occupation of shepherds. The country produces almost exclusively raw material, and seventy per cent. of its exports are the fruits of agricultural industry. It is, therefore, rather village than town life with which the student of national manners is confronted; and after the capital, which, with its port of Piræus, has a population of 150,000, there are only three other towns in which it exceeds 20,000, and five more in which a total of 10,000 is reached.[1] Nevertheless, the Greeks are gregarious, and live together in villages, while isolated farms and cottages are rare; so that the cultivator is often at a considerable distance from the land he tills. This is largely the case throughout the south of Europe, and is to be attributed, in great measure, to the want of security which has prevailed since the beginning of time, a circumstance which also affects the situation of villages, for they still, in the majority of cases, follow the sites of ancient settlements, built where the mountains offered natural guarantees against sudden attack or invasion. It is among these villages that the manners

[1] (*a*) Patras, Corfu, and Hermoupolis in Syra; (*b*) Zante, Larissa, Tripolitza, Calamata, and perhaps Argos.

and customs with which this volume deals are preserved; for although among the poorer citizens in Athens there is still no lack of such traditions, a stranger might remain there for a long while, mixing with the wealthier classes, and with that numerous element of semi-foreign Greeks who have reassembled there from all parts of the East, and yet detect but little trace of that individual life and peculiar bent of the popular mind which is, perhaps, more characteristic and more full of interest here than in any other European country.

The enterprising spirit of the Greeks carries many of them abroad in pursuit of the different vocations for which they have a special aptitude; and there is also a continual thronging towards the capital. In many parts, and especially on certain of the islands, the nature of the soil is wholly inadequate to supply the wants of even a thin population, while there are none of the conditions that favour the development of indigenous industry; a large proportion of the inhabitants are therefore forced to seek their fortunes elsewhere. But a firmly-rooted local patriotism, which seems to have the strongest hold in regions where nature is sternest and most unproductive, brings many of them back again; while there is, of course, a preponderating stationary element in a people one-half of whose total number are employed in agricultural and pastoral pursuits. Among these, the stationary character and a marked separate individuality from valley to valley and range to range has been accentuated by the physical features of the country which they occupy, by the difficulty of communication, and the long devious paths which separate the dwellers in one plain from

their immediate neighbours across the mountains; by the same conditions, in fact, which in ancient times split up the Hellenic nation into a number of small, independent, and mutually emulous units. To this day traces of the ancient rivalries, the local jealousies may be found, though modified by the circumstance of altered aims. Without going to districts which have for many centuries maintained the exclusive independence of the famous men of Maina, the Bœotian will still be found to be somewhat of a stranger in Sparta; and I have heard those in Sparta express themselves very disparagingly of their neighbours across Taygetus, of the race of Messenians in general. It would, therefore, be necessary to deal with each of the provinces separately in order to give a complete picture of the life and characteristics of the people throughout a country so small in area, so rich in vitality and interest; but as the majority of the customs and superstitions which we are about to investigate are the common property of the whole Hellenic race, and are not grouped according to locality in the following chapters, a few general remarks will suffice to give them the necessary relief and environment.

It has been frequently observed that the Greek is not by nature adapted for agricultural pursuits, and undoubtedly the most is not made at present of a country which alternates between rugged impracticable mountain and alluvial plains of extreme fertility. Methods and implements alike are antiquated, and the peasant, by nature extremely quick up to a certain age, is also very slow to adopt any innovation, and content to go on with the ancestral system which his

fathers used before him. On the other hand, in certain regions where nature yields but the scantiest subsistence in return for the hardest toil, the fact that anything is produced at all is evidence of the effort of which he is capable, while the laborious terracing of steep mountain slopes, now often fallen out of cultivation, prove that, under favourable circumstances, much more has been and might be accomplished. Many districts, again, are malarial, and a connection may be traced between climatic influences and the indolence of the peasant. The primitive tools in use often entail an unprofitable expenditure of physical exertion. The plough has scarcely altered since the days of Hesiod; and it is characteristic that the land which is worked with the hoe yields a better return than that which is ploughed with horses or oxen. Where only the surface is scratched there is but little use for the harrow, and consequently this instrument of agriculture is also of the most primitive kind. A horse draws, by a double chain made fast to either end, a wedge-shaped board, on which the driver stands, balancing himself by the reins, and the seed is thus rather pressed down into the ground than covered. Thrashing is carried on in much the same manner; a number of such boards, on which the drivers ride, are drawn by a number of horses abreast round and round the stone-paved thrashing-floor. No use is made even of the simplest machinery, although the magnificent unbroken plains of Thessaly are admirably adapted for farming on a large scale; but there, at present, capital is wholly wanting, and the peasant generally shows but little disposition to adopt improvements, even when they are placed in his way.

Subsistence is easy, the climate yields a fair return to a minimum of labour, and the prospect of improving his condition by an increase of toil offers but little inducement to him.

The fact is that the Greek peasant has yet to recover from the moral deterioration of many centuries. All stimulus to labour and improvement was taken from him by perpetual insecurity and spoliation, and finally by the conditions of his tenure under the Turkish domination. Whether his lot was controlled by the foreign Aga or the native Primate, the terms of cultivation were much the same, and care was taken that he should never be out of their debt, nor able to glean more than a bare subsistence by the toil of his hands. The result was to engender an indifference to indebtedness and misery, and to remove all inducement to develop his holding, since he knew that he would not be allowed to retain whatever surplus over the strictly necessary he might by increased exertion produce. Continued misery and oppression enervated his natural energies, and he had no part or lot in the land, where even the fruits of his mountains, the dye-plants and the vallonea, were all the perquisites of the privileged class. Among the many historic causes which contributed to bring about such a result may be mentioned the "Konákia," or obligation to find quarters for rapacious mercenaries; the institution of the Klephts, who requisitioned whatever the avarice of the Agas had not seized upon; the insecurity and destruction of property caused by their raids,[2] and the system of tax-farming, under which even their

[2] Some account of the Klephts will be found in chap. ix.

own countrymen grew rich at the expense of the peasantry. These and many similar causes have engendered habits which it will need much time and encouragement, and the interest of ownership, or secure tenure, to eradicate.

Religion, again, which has a strong disciplinary hold upon the country folk, is not altogether favourable to the development of industrious habits. The year is divided between fast days, on which their nourishment is insufficient to sustain men engaged in hard manual labour, and feast days, upon which it is not lawful to work, occupying about one-third of the year. Meat eggs, and milk are forbidden every Wednesday and Friday, in addition to which there are long periods of uninterrupted fast: forty-eight days before Easter, the fast of the Holy Apostles, which must not be observed for less than fifteen days, the first fortnight in August, and a period of forty days before Christmas. During the Lenten fast, fish and oil are also prohibited, and the diet consists only of bread and olives, with caviare and vegetables for the few who can afford them.

Nevertheless, the country people in Greece are, as a rule, a very attractive people; proud, independent and hospitable to a fault, of extreme chastity and sober and temperate as becomes their thrift. The traveller will notice that it is not so much the spots where good wine may be obtained that his guide will indicate, but the place where there is a good spring or a famous well. "At such and such a spot," they say, "we will halt, for there the water is good." They have the passionate temper of a southern race when the blood



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is roused, and are too ready to exercise the ruder form of justice, not having yet learned to appreciate the extreme value that is set on human life among peoples whom a long age of security has accustomed to the blessings of peace; but, on the other hand, they are singularly free from many of the vices that a higher civilization is familiar with. Their virtues are their own; their vices are, in a great measure, those of circumstance.

In spite of the apparent poverty of the peasantry, their excessive thrift, not to say penuriousness, together with favourable conditions of tenure, have, since the Independence, in many parts of the country enabled them to accumulate a good deal of money, and in the districts where climatic conditions are favourable, they are rapidly buying out the larger proprietors, who have, as a rule, but little taste for country pursuits, and prefer the life of the city, so that peasant proprietorship is gradually becoming more and more the rule. Facilities for borrowing at exorbitant interest are, unfortunately, only too ready to hand, for the Greek who has gained a small competency abroad returns to invest it in petty usury at home; and it often happens that the peasant turned proprietor is paying the double in interest for money, borrowed to complete the purchase or to build a house, of what would formerly have fallen to the share of his landlord.

In the Peloponnese, where individual proprietorship prevails, cultivation is chiefly carried on by hired labour, notably the profitable currant industry, of which the Hellenic kingdom has a monopoly, which entails a considerable amount of work at two periods—in

February, when the soil is hoed in order to expose the roots of the plants, and heaped into little pyramids between the vines; and in May, when it is made level again. Hired labour is very dear, owing to the cost of living in a country suffering from abnormally heavy taxation, but it is brought down by the competition of Bulgarians, Albanians, and Montenegrins, who throng the southern shore of the Gulf of Corinth at the period of activity.

Generally speaking, however, a form of Metayer tenure has, for the most part, prevailed — a system which is, indeed, as old here as history, for Tyrtaeus sang of the Messenians:

> Δεσποσυνᾶσι φέροντες ἀναγκαίης ὑπὸ λυγρῆς
> Ἥμισυ πᾶν ὅσσον καρπὸν ἄρουρα φέρει.[3]

In Thessaly, which is still in the hands of large proprietors, the peasants as a rule pay one-third of the produce in kind. The plains of Thessaly are, however, subject to bad harvests, in consequence of a succession of frost and snow too soon after the seed has been committed to the ground in autumn; and a series of such bad years, coupled with want of method and a want of proper irrigation, have reduced the peasants to very sore straits; but facilities are now being offered them by the Government for borrowing money upon easy terms, which will enable them gradually to become proprietors of their holdings. In Eubœa, where the return to agriculture is large, the payment of a third, and less where the land is poor, has enabled the peasantry to buy out many of the original holders, and already a greater part of the island is in their hands. In Bœotia,

[3] Fragment preserved in Pausanias iv., chap. 14.

I learned from several large proprietors that it was the custom to advance seed to the cultivator, which advance became the first charge on the produce of the harvest, with fifteen per cent. more as the landlord's share. In the Ionian islands two systems prevail. Under one, the owner takes two-thirds of the total produce, but supplies seeds and implements, manure, all, in short, except mere manual labour; the other system resembles the Italian *metairie,* under which the tenant cannot be dispossessed, save in very exceptional circumstances, which it is not practically possible to enforce; a fifth of the holding is looked upon as belonging absolutely to the tenant, inalienable from his person and descending to his next-of-kin. Peasants holding under this system pay nominally one-half of the produce to the owner of the land, and furnish themselves with the necessary equipment; but it seldom happens that the proprietor obtains the stipulated share of his dues, and the peasant is practically master of the situation. For instance, the olive groves, which represent the chief wealth of the islands, are approximately valued at their estimated yield, while the fruit is still ripening, by the peasant and a representative of the owner. The latter, however, is generally himself of the peasant class, and in sympathy with the tenant, and therefore inclined to under-estimate the yield; then, when the return has been made, and the share of the landlord determined, he is frequently informed after the harvest that such and such of the trees were despoiled by insects, that hail or storm damaged so many more, so that his part of the produce is reduced to about half of the estimate.

The principal agricultural products on which the

peasant industry of Greece is engaged are wheat and barley, grown on the dry lands up to a height of 1,500 metres; Indian corn and maize, on the well-watered plains, and in such mountain districts as retain the moisture in the soil, up to a level of over 1,000 metres; cotton, tobacco, olives, and grapes; while in the Peloponnese and the island of Zante, on the coasts, and up to a height of 350 metres above the sea, the currant vine flourishes, and furnishes the staple export of the country. Among natural products of the forest may be mentioned vallonea, carob-beans, gall-nuts, and Prinokokki,[4] a red dye gathered from the holly-oak, one of the commonest mountain shrubs.

The population of the Peloponnese is considerably denser than that of central Greece, and central Greece, again, more closely populated than Thessaly. If Athens and the Piræus be left out of consideration, central Greece can only show twenty-two inhabitants to the square kilometer, as against thirty-six in the Peloponnese.

Generally speaking, I think the traveller would notice a considerable difference between the external aspect of the villages in northern and central Greece, with which I class Eubœa, and those of the Peloponnese; while the island villages, again, have a third and very distinct individuality; the first being much the poorest and humblest in character, the second owing their prosperity to the greater wealth of the soil, while the third are maintained in tolerable comfort by the earnings of the islanders abroad, and their extreme thrift and cleanliness at home. There is also considerable contrast between

[4] *Quercus coccifera.* In Arabic *Kermes*, whence cramoisie and crimson. The dye is formed by an insect on the leaves of the holly-oak.

the east and western sides of central Greece. The east, with a dry climate, in which the Aleppo pine flourishes all over the lower ranges, comparatively easy of access, with much cultivable land, is smiling, and prosperous, and covered with towns and villages; whereas the west, with its wild mountain-ranges, its deep and gloomy gorges, its forests of beech and oak, both evergreen and deciduous, its damp climate and marshy plains, has remained as in ancient times, undeveloped and cut off from the rest of the world.

Let us look more closely at a village of the first category. I will take one with which I am tolerably familiar, Achmetaga, in the island of Eubœa, as typical of a village occupied by Metayers, and it will serve for a model of any other such village in Attica and central Greece. The houses grouped round the little church are all one-storied oblong cabins built of the stone which is almost everywhere ready to hand, from thirty to thirty-six feet in length by about twenty-four feet in width. Two-thirds of this area are devoted to the dwelling part, while the other third is reserved for the stabling of the beasts in winter; and there is seldom any partition wall to screen it, for the peasant likes to keep them in sight, having the same feeling about them which old Eumæus entertained for his swine:

οὐδὲ συβώτῃ
ἥνδανεν αὐτόθι κοῖτος, ὑῶν ἄπο κοιμηθῆναι.[5]

The family live in common, men, women, and children together; often, indeed, several generations of them, in the habitable end, which has a dried-clay flooring, or in some cases wooden planking raised a foot or two above

[5] "Odyssey," xiv. 524.

the ground. The fire, on a hearth of stone, is against the wall in the more recent and better-built cottages which boast of a chimney, though in many villages it is still in the middle of the room, the smoke escaping as best it may through the holes in the roof. Furniture there is generally none, unless it be a rude cupboard, or a wooden chest, or, perhaps, a few shelves to hold their simple cooking utensils. In one corner is a stack of rugs, mattresses, and cushions. These laid upon the ground form their beds at night. The mattresses, stuffed with maize husks, are covered with a rough carpet material which the women weave, and so are the square cushions, which serve as seats by day when the simple meal is spread upon the ground. Sometimes there is a table, but not often, in the genuine peasant's huts.

Κλίναι, τραπέζαι, προσκεφαλαία, στρώματα,[6]

as Aristophanes summed up the household gear, are still the limit of their ambition. Strings of onions and bunches of golden maize hang from the rafters, and a large earthenware water-cooler, with a number of smaller red jars and bowls of classic pattern, make up the humble equipment of the cottage. No house is complete without its *ikon*, generally a picture of the *Panaghia* or Virgin, but occasionally representing the saint whose name the householder bears, or in whose especial protection family tradition has confidence. Sometimes a little rude shrine is built up round the picture, and in front of it is always a lamp, which many families keep burning night and day, often stinting themselves of oil to keep the saint supplied. On great

[6] Aristoph., "Acharn.," v. 1089.

occasions the holy picture, which represents the "sacrarium" of the house, is decked out with wreaths and flowers. It will be solemnly borne away to the new dwelling if the family change quarters, like the household gods of the olden time; and should the little lamp go out upon the road, it would be held to forbode some grave misfortune.

Outside the door is the oven, a beehive-shaped structure of clay, which is heated well-nigh red-hot with wood, after which the fire is raked out, and the dough wrapped round with leaves is introduced for baking. There are also generally without supporting posts for a primitive loom. Sometimes the loom is arranged with cross-bars between two young trees, behind which the lower hind-posts are driven into the ground, so that the weaver sits in the shade of the trees at work, or else a little thatch is built to shelter her from the sun; for the houses are only occupied at night or during bad weather, and village life is entirely in the open air. All the women who have not gone into the fields to work with the men will be spinning in the doorways or weaving at the loom; and wonderful is the work the village wives produce from such rude implements, using the natural dyes they extract from the plants that grow in the neighbourhood—red from the holly-oak, and brown from the heart of the plane-tree.

All this folk pay for their houses a nominal rental of a bushel of wheat per annum, in order to secure the owner's proprietory claim, which would otherwise pass to the occupier by squatters' right after thirty years of unmolested occupation. They are at liberty to cultivate pretty well as much land as they care to, paying to the

landlord one-third in kind. An attempt to convert this form of *metairie* into a fixed rent-charge, calculated at a far lower rate than the average annual return, with a view to encouraging them to effort of which they should reap the entire benefit, was unanimously rejected by the peasants, whose congenital mistrust cannot yet place confidence even in those of whose benevolence they have experience. The produce here is almost exclusively wheat or maize, but every family maintains a plot of vineyard for home consumption. Many also keep silk-worms, and a small quantity of silk is spun for dress. This industry, which is of historic antiquity in Greece, might be much developed in a country where the mulberry-tree flourishes as it does here. Honey is also produced in considerable quantities; and this village, though not a large one, has produced as much as 25,000 lbs. in a year. Of late, however, this industry had almost entirely ceased, owing to the destruction of the vegetation in the mountains round by the forest fires so disastrously frequent in Greece in summer, through which great tracts are rapidly becoming disafforested, The hives in use are cylinders of hollowed plane trunk some two feet high, especially suited to the domestication of the wild bee, whose natural nest is built in a hollow stem.

The amount that will suffice to support a peasant family is extraordinarily small. Their wants are nearly all supplied by what they can grow; a few sheep furnish the wool which the women spin and weave, or if they have none themselves they can procure it from the shepherds in return for the breadstuffs which they grow; bread and olives furnish the staple of their food, and

many of them hardly see money at all. I remember a family of six in Bœotia whose actual money expenditure was reduced to eight drachmas[7] a month; a little cotton, sugar, coffee, and tobacco was all they needed to buy, the rest of their requirements were supplied by the farm. In Eubœa ten pounds a year will amply support a married man, and whatever he can make beyond this is laid by. Thus it will easily be seen that, with wheat fetching a good price, as it does in a country which only produces sufficient grain to feed its population for half the year, it is not difficult for the peasant to accumulate considerable sums of money, where the land is fairly good, and it is not surprising to find that in the case of exemptions from forced military service, which the law accords to widows' sons and certain other categories, the Government has found it answer to require a conditional contribution of 100 drachmas from those exempted, such contributions being readily forthcoming.

The village of Achmetaga is one under extremely favourable conditions, and the pappas, or village priest, was enabled, by the encouragement he received, to pay considerable attention to the elementary education of the children of his flock. He was a very superior man to the type of the priests in small villages, who often differ only from the rest of the peasants by their high-crowned hats and home-spun cassocks, and the knowledge by heart of the simpler liturgies which they frequently cannot read. The pappas of Achmetaga counted himself a wealthy man, though his total income fell considerably short of £30 a year, to which stipend each of the villagers contributed an annual bushel of

[7] The value of the drachma is about eightpence.

wheat, with sundry offerings of loaves on days of festival. He did no field work, and only cultivated a little vineyard; but he contrived to keep himself neat and to bring up his family respectably.

Not many miles from Achmetaga might be found a specimen of another Metayer colony under the worst possible conditions, presenting a melancholy spectacle of poverty and neglect. The owner of the land had apparently been quite unconscious of the existence of any duty towards his tenants, and had gleaned what he could from them, without ever expending anything on improvement or restoring its miserable tenements. The little church was shored up on crutches, and appeared to be in imminent danger of falling in; the cottages were wretched hovels, composed, many of them, of little more than mud and wattles, with roofs so full of holes as to afford no protection in the winter and the rainy season. A strain of madness, generally very rare in Greece, had crept in, and no care had been exercised to isolate the wretched victims, or prevent them from intermarrying, and a number of children showed the unmistakable signs of idiocy. The destitution of this village was extreme, measured by the standard of comfort in other lands, and it was instructive as a contrast with other villages, where the peasants are themselves proprietors, and yet it was a misery much tempered by the climate, the bright air, and the sun. Moreover, the inhabitants had something better to look forward to; the lands had just passed into the hands of a new owner, and their cottages were about to be rebuilt of stone upon a better and a healthier site a few hundred yards away. When I was among them the

white-kilted peasants were busied shelling their maize from the husks; the winter provision was gathered in, great heaps of golden grain lay piled against the cottages, and they seemed bright and merry enough as they squatted, men and women together, at work in the sun. They had known no other experience, and life is so easy here.

Within easy reach of these two places, the large and flourishing village of St. Anna, on the heights above the eastern coast, presents an example of the other form of tenure, being inhabited exclusively by peasant proprietors, who with their savings and borrowings have bought out the original holders, and established themselves as an independent commune. The country-folk here make a decidedly good impression; they are more independent in their address, and lavish in that ready hospitality which characterizes the Greek of the country districts. The houses are larger and more solidly built than in the Metayer colonies, consisting generally of two stories with several rooms in each, and these for the most part clean and not without some pretension to comfort. But herein also lies the burden that weighs upon these villagers; when they become proprietors they are apt to grow too ambitious, and vie with each other in the pride of their establishments. Consequently they all get into debt over house-building, and the rate of interest exacted by the small country usurers is enormous. Meanwhile, the spirit of independence which their new position fosters, makes them shy of appealing to those who might be willing to help them on reasonable terms, and they prefer to go on renewing their bills at a ruinous rate. Externally, however, and

in his surroundings, the peasant owner presents a far more well-to-do appearance than the farmers of the proprietary villages. They are a light-hearted people, proud of being able to offer hospitality to the stranger, fond of talking and amusement, with something in the pocket always, as the doctor at St. Anna observed, to pay the piper with when dancing is in prospect, though less ready to remember his own little account. They are famous dancers in Eubœa, and talking and dancing are their chief distractions. Not long ago village games were still an important feature in country life, running and jumping, and the throwing of heavy stones, a survival of the old athletic contests; but change is creeping in apace, the spread of cheap and worthless newspapers is substituting rapidly a taste for political discussion over the coffee or mastic, for the old healthy competition of corporeal exercises; nor does any man who has held some small office under the Administration care, at the expiration of his term, to return to simple husbandry, but spends his time in political agitation, and in disseminating the ineptitudes of petty partisanship.

The description of one such village will answer tolerably well for any other throughout central Greece: small one-storied stone-built cottages, more often than not set in a square or oblong round the little church, all facing inwards and turning their backs on the world outside. In the west, villages are rarer, and great tracts, like the plain of the Achelous, are only tenanted by nomad shepherds, who build themselves a rude rush shelter for the severe weather, when winter drives them to the lowlands. The little towns are

more pretentious, and many of them can boast comfortable and roomy houses, owned by successful merchants. Some, like Chalcis or Naupaktus, are circumscribed by their mediæval fortress ring, and in these a richer quarter has sprung up as a suburb outside. The port of Volo presents a flourishing appearance; and so does Lamia, with its rich tobacco-fields. Thebes, with its three main streets, called after Pindar, Pelopidas, and Epaminondas, retains some little trace of its middle-age prosperity, and is very picturesque in summer, with its open shops under their broad sheltering roofs, the straw mats stretched as awnings across the street, and the lines of young acacias down the main thoroughfare, with its groups of white-kilted countrymen discussing bargains at the tables of the *cafés* which straggle across the road.

In Thessaly there is still a Turkish character about the villages, with the minarets of ruined mosques standing solitary, like landmarks of a vanished race. Those at the foot of the mountains and on the slopes are also built of rough-hewn stone; but in the great plains, where the sites are far from the nearest quarry, and even at the principal town, Larissa, the houses are, for the most part, constructed of mud-bricks, or lath and plaster, with the trellised windows and the enclosing wall which mark the Eastern character. The population of the plains is much thinned since the exodus of the Mussulman peasantry, and, as has been already mentioned, impoverished by a succession of bad harvests and want of method. A favourable contrast is presented by the inhabitants of the flourishing villages which cover the slopes of Mount Pelion

and the promontory of Magnesia. When the Turks monopolized the plains they left the mountains to the native Greeks, who, however, in this region enjoyed considerable privileges and conditions, stimulating them to unusual industry. The higher villages produce silk, wine, honey, and garden-stuffs, and those at a lower level, in addition to silk, oil and cotton, abundance of fruit and oranges. One of them, Zágora, was, even under the Ottoman rule, an important commercial centre, where the cloth for the rough overcoats of the country people was manufactured, together with a great deal of silk for export; and to this day the antique art of gem-cutting is preserved in Makrinitza, whence hail many of the intagli offered for sale as curiosities to the unwary traveller in Greece. Silken cords, tassels, and girdles are also made, and the men have a reputation for working in leather. The houses are comfortably and stoutly built, many of them being constructed tower-fashion to render them easily capable of defence. Tríkeri, situated on the heights at the extreme end of the Magnesian promontory, is a maritime colony, whose inhabitants are boat-builders, or seamen, who cut sponges, or fit out small ventures for the carrying trade, after the manner of the islanders.

The standard of comfort in the Peloponnese, where the peasants are, for the most part, proprietors, is generally higher. The southern shore of the Gulf of Corinth, with its miles of currant vineyards, is the most valuable property in Greece; but being also the great highway to the capital from the west, traversed by the first railway of any considerable extent, it has, perhaps

fewer peculiarly individual characteristics. Patras, the chief centre of export, has a very modern aspect, and a cosmopolitan population, including a number of Italians and a colony of foreign merchants; while its quays are thronged with Albanians, Montenegrins, and Jews. The rich valley of ancient Lacedæmon, lying like a hollow shield between Taygetus and Parnon, with no lack of water from either slope, is full of wealthy farmers: a truly idyllic land, in which one searches in vain for some prototype in nature of the rugged ideal which the Spartans set before themselves; while Sparta itself, fragrant with gardens and framed in groves of acacia, mulberry, and poplar, is an important and busy little centre not without some tinge of the ancient jealousy of the capital, and a headquarters of provincial conservatism. Tripolitza, the capital of the Morea before the insurrection, is famous for its smiths. Though neither iron nor coal are to be had on the spot, and it is quite in the centre of the peninsula, and stands at a height of 3,000 feet above the sea, this industry has for some unaccountable reason established itself there, and ploughshares and axe-heads, horseshoes and all kind of iron and steel wares are sent out to all parts of the Greek continent and islands. The greatest external prosperity, however, is exhibited by the villages of the fertile plain of Messenia. Kalamata, the principal town and port, has an extensive bazaar, and a direct trade with the north African coast. Dried figs are exported in great quantities, as well as what currants are grown in the south of the peninsula; while the mulberry is largely cultivated for the silk industry. The villages of the plain are surrounded with thick hedges of the

prickly pear, which grows luxuriantly in the stoneless soil, and walls in the fig plantations. The houses are mostly two-storied, with glazed windows and balconies, and vine-trellised pergolas below, presenting an appearance of order, neatness, and comfort which contrasts with the hovels in which the peasantry live in central and northern Greece. There is a prosperous look, too, about the people, whose linen kilts are of the cleanest, and whose waistcoats are brave with various embroidery. The condition of the villages is a certain indication of the wealth or poverty of the soil, and in the mountains of Arcadia every degree is represented, from the picturesque *tetrapolis* of Andritzena, set in a bower-like nook of fruitful slopes, with solid, well-built houses, whose projecting roofs and balconies almost meet above the climbing streets, and exclude the fierceness of the summer suns, to the starving villages of the high central plateau, where the ungrateful land yields so small a return to laborious cultivation that it does not suffice to feed the sparse population, and the inhabitants are obliged to descend to the coasts and work as labourers through the winter, returning to their homes to cut timber in the spring.

One other district deserves special mention, on account of the distinct individual character of its inhabitants, and their curious mode of life, which remains an anachronism even in Greece. The country of the Mainotes, who have been alluded to in the previous chapter, occupies the ancient Taenarian promontory, which is a prolongation of the range of Taygetus terminating in Cape Matapan. The modern province extends westward to within a short distance of Kalamata

in Messenia, and eastward beyond Gythion, the port of Sparta. But it is especially in the region of Mesa Mani, or Inner Maina, including the south-western coast as far as Matapan, the table-land between the central spine and the cliffs arising abruptly from the sea, that district which acquired for itself the ominous name of "the land of evil counsel,"[8] that a primitive people have retained to this day their own peculiar social code, a mode of life, and a number of curious customs to which frequent allusion will be made in subsequent pages.

It is the proud boast of the Mainotes that they are the lineal representatives of the Spartans, unadulterated by foreign immigration, and that their rocky promontory has never been conquered by the various invaders of Greece. It appears, however, more probable that they represent, in some remote degree, the Periœci of Laconia, the descendants of the older Achæans, who preceded the Dorian invasion, and who were secured with a certain independence in the enjoyment of their property. For the Periœci seem to have occupied the maritime districts, for the most part, at the time of the Roman conquest, while such of the genuine Spartans as still remained at that time occupied lands in the interior; and the southern peninsula of Maina, the only part of the province in which the inhabitants can claim immunity from foreign immixture, is so barren that it would never have been occupied by the invading Dorians while the vanquished race were left in possession of the better lands. The Roman conquest freed the Periœci from their traditional

[8] Κακοβούλια Μάνη.

semi-servitude, and established the self-governing community of the Eleuthero-Laconians, whose chief town was Taenaron. Whatever may be the truth about their origin, it seems certain that they are a very ancient and unmixed race, differing in marked characteristics from the people who surround them; and though their vaunt of never being vanquished may be a little overstated, it is undoubtedly true that the various invaders of the Morea found their inhospitable mountains difficult to occupy, and preferred to conciliate the dwellers in the rocky promontory with privileges which ensured them against foreign colonization. The Frankish princes overawed them with the strong castle of Passava, which guarded the northern passes, and built later on the fortress of Maina, which gave its name to the whole peninsula, in the neighbourhood of Matapan, thus holding them in some sort of control. After the battle of Lepanto, the narrow creeks became the stronghold of corsairs, who kept up a desultory warfare with the Sultan's fleets; but a payment of tribute to Constantinople was secured by the establishment of Turkish garrisons in the castles. When Morosini expelled the Turks from the Morea, the Mainotes were the first to join his standard, and they gained in return an independent administration with special immunities; and from this time probably began the local feuds and jealousies which survive in the form of the vendetta to this day. After the re-establishment of the Ottoman rule, they became once more a dependent, but never a servile, race, and were ever ready to rise in rebellion against their foreign sovereign, though following with a more than feudal loyalty their

own patriarchal leaders and the Bey, elected by the eight hereditary captains, the chiefs of the principal Mainote families.

Their condition has been aptly compared to that of the Highland clansmen in the latter days of the Stuarts. They owed a nominal submission to the Sultan, and paid their tribute to the Capitan Pasha, who had the Ægean islands and Maina under his control; but if the tribute was not forthcoming, no Turkish emissary was likely to advance far into Mesa Mani to demand it. During the last century they acquired a bad name for piracy and brigandage; for the country is excessively poor and sterile, and being for ever at daggers drawn with the sovereign power, they were compelled to support themselves by plunder and rapine. Their services in the war of Independence under the famous Petrobey are matter of history; they were among the first to take the field, and they held out to the last, resisting all the attempts of Ibrahim to penetrate their passes. It was with great difficulty only that they could be induced to surrender their semi-independence so long maintained, and accept absorption in the new Hellenic kingdom; and to this day they are treated with peculiar indulgence, and conciliated by immunity from taxation, granted under colour of the great services they rendered to the cause of Greece.

The interior of Maina is the most barren land imaginable: a plateau of rock and rolling stones; the only trees are figs and stunted olives, and the most laborious cultivation barely yields enough here to keep body and soul together. The larger stones are collected and built up into walls which intersect the plateau in

labyrinthine lines; in the narrow spaces enclosed by these is grown a little thin grain, which there is no moisture to swell, and which is plucked almost ear by ear. Lupines, "the grapes of Maina," seem to flourish in a land apparently devoid of soil. Terrible winds sweep across the promontory, and it is necessary to build sheltering walls of stone round the young figs and olives until they grow strong enough to resist the force of the blast. Wherever it is possible, a little red marl is collected in the rock hollows to grow something in, and many of the patches thus secured to cultivation are only a few yards in area. There is no fuel but the wild thyme from the mountain, and the roots of the stunted rock-herbage, which scarcely suffices to feed a few undersized sheep and goats, and even this must be fetched from a great distance. The pigs fare best, for wild lupines are plentiful. There is no water but what can be collected in underground reservoirs during the rainy season, and this is always thick and muddy. It is not strange that the inhabitants look prematurely old from the hardness of their life, and the faces of the children are often lined and contracted.

The old feudal chiefs are a more real power here than the law or the gendarmerie, and it is still impossible to put down the vendetta between family and family when blood has once been spilt. The slayer flies to the mountains, where he is safe from the gendarmerie, and his relatives bring food to the appointed places; his enemies would never denounce him to the authorities, but by the unwritten law of custom seek to avenge the blow on himself or his nearest relative, who is consequently always armed and on the alert. Sometimes these blood-

feuds have reached such a pitch that a whole village becomes involved, and the men shut themselves up in their towers and only the women go abroad. Then the hereditary chief endeavours to compose the feud ; a truce is declared and terms are drawn up, and he who has last taken blood becomes the man of the family to which the victim belonged, and serves them faithfully for the rest of his life. Such truces were common enough in old times, though well-nigh impossible now, and they were never broken.

The character of the population is reflected in their villages. Every house is a tower, loopholed for defence. In the lower story is the stable or the olive-press, while the upper chamber, reached by a ladder which can be drawn up through a trap, is the dwelling-place of the family. They present a most singular appearance, these nests of square towers fretting the horizon above some blue rock creek or dotted about on the mountain heights. Each house has its own cistern outside the village, and its circular stone-paved threshing-floor. The prickly-pear, the little olives, and the fig-trees make a green belt round the village, which is approached only by a narrow bridle-path as rough and stony as a torrent bed.

The people, from their savage blood-feuds and their old reputation for piracy, have a bad name among their neighbours, and yet nowhere in Greece are the prescriptions of the Church observed with greater exactness ; and to those few who come amongst them with a word of recommendation from one of their chiefs they exhibit great hospitality, according to their powers. In physical type they are not particularly prepossessing, but their faces are finely cut, sensitive, and intelligent. This

characteristic applies generally to the peasant population throughout Greece; only in Arcadia it appeared to me that the type was somewhat less refined and more like that of the country-folk in heavier-soiled countries. The men of Maina are spare and active, dark-haired and dark in complexion, wearing a thin beard in full, with the nose prominent, the cheek slightly hollow, and the forehead vertical and high. There is a general absence of costume, due no doubt to the poverty which now prevails; a few old men still wear the baggy knickerbockers of the Greek islanders, but the rags of European dress are the universal garb of the population. Only the women retain some trace of it, in the presence of a broad red stripe round the skirt, which is removed in mourning and not worn for two years after the death of a relative.

Since the war of Independence, the Albanian costume has become the national dress of continental Greece. The white kilt (*fustanella*) with its many pleatings is now worn quite short, though a few old-fashioned people may still be seen with the more graceful skirt in use at the beginning of the century, which fell an inch or two below the knee. The fustanella is really, I imagine, a decorative development of the shirt, worn like a tunic belted at the waist, as still seen among the poorer peasants who cannot afford such "ungrudging" folds of linen. Round the waist is a leathern belt with a large pouch in front, like a purse of many pockets, containing flint and steel, tobacco, and a long knife in a sheath. The poorer countrymen wear white woollen leggings descending like gaiters over shoes with upturning points (*tzaroukia*), the wealthier folk brocaded greaves of red, or blue, or buff. The shirt has loose hanging sleeves, and over it is worn

a waistcoat, or rather, a short jacket, the sleeves of which are allowed to hang from the shoulder behind. In some cases the hanging sleeves have been replaced by a sort of flat wing, and in others they have disappeared altogether. In Eubœa this jacket is generally of a dark-blue colour, in Thebes black prevails, in Messenia the buff or dark-blue cloth is elaborately embroidered with brown or red ; each district has its own fashion, and on festival days crimson velvet jackets worked with gold are not uncommon. On the head a red cap with a long silk tassel completes the costume, but the poorer people merely knot a handkerchief round the hair. In Thessaly the prevailing dress is a loose garment of coarse black cloth belted at the waist, and reaching to the knee, with white woollen leggings below. White or blue woollen overcoats with a hood are worn in winter, or heavy cloaks of impenetrable frieze. Every district has its own peculiarities, which it would be only tedious to enumerate.

The old dress of the Peloponnesian ladies is rarely seen now with the exception of the cap, which is still much worn in Patras, and is not yet rare in Athens. It consisted of a short gold-embroidered velvet jacket, open on the throat and breast, and fastened with a hook at the waist, with sleeves tight to the elbow, and from thence spreading into large hanging cuffs. With this a silk skirt would be worn, and on the head was a loose red cap (*fezé*), with a tassel of silk or gold wire hanging by a cord some eight inches long. This dress was also worn by the ladies of Hydra and Spezza, where, however, the cap was replaced by an embroidered muslin veil, gracefully arranged so as to frame the face.

Outside the Peloponnesus, again, the older Greek dress survives at Megara, where the women in holiday attire don a jacket reaching to the hip, open at the neck, and tight at the waist, which is cut very high. The front, the shoulders, and the cuffs are elaborately embroidered with gold or silver braid. The skirt is of a dark blue or green material lined with white, and trimmed with a broad band of red, which the unmarried girls turn back and fasten up behind, so that the skirt is much shortened in front. Over this is either a bright and rather crudely embroidered apron, or a sash fastened gracefully round the hips. The head is covered by a cap of cloth with rows of overlapping coins stitched on to it, and over this again a veil, often of the finest weft of silk with threads of gold interwoven. Strings of coins and chains of gold and silver hang down over the breast.

But the dress generally worn by the peasant women in Greece is also of the Albanian type. The short white jacket (*kondogouni*) has wide sleeves either plain or embroidered with silk; over it is a long sleeveless coat (*zipouni*) reaching to the knee, of white wool trimmed with a band of red, or blue, or black cloth, embroidered with a similar colour at the arm-holes and the corners. The skirt is also white, and has embroidery of wool or silk of great richness for weddings or feast-days. A yellow handkerchief of coarse muslin is knotted round the face on working-days; but veils of silk and muslin, with a string of coins across the forehead, are the proper complement of the costume. In Eubœa the women also wear a broad plait of false hair hanging down the back, and at St. Anna in that island the coins of the head-dress are hung upon a red

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band, which has a very pretty effect under the soft shadow of the veil.

The general impression produced by a crowd in such costume is very brilliant. White is the prevailing note, relieved by the red of the men's caps and the bright colours of the embroidery. It accords with the brilliancy of the landscape, the vivid polished green of the foliage, the intense sunlight with its purple shadows, the blue of sea and sky and the clearness of the atmosphere.

The islanders still retain a costume more genuinely Oriental in character; long blue or brown knickerbockers of voluminous fold hanging below the knee, with shoes and stockings or high boots of yellow calfskin; a blue embroidered jacket, and a sash wound round and round the waist. In the smaller Greek islands, where many of the population are compelled to seek work abroad as sailors or artisans, and are brought into frequent contact with other men, costume is rapidly disappearing; but in Crete and the other Turkish islands it is seen in all its glory. The dress of a Cretan chieftain, of the finest dark-blue cloth lined with crimson, with his ample sash of silk sustaining his silver-mounted pistols and yataghan, will often cost him little short of fifty pounds, and may even far exceed this sum when the workmanship of his weapons is exceptionally good. Two peculiarities of costume struck me in the islands which I visited. At Kythnos the women wear a sort of canvas mask over the face to protect the complexion from the sun, and long coarse gloves reaching above the elbow. The head is draped in linen, and the mask begins just below the eyes. And in the island of Nios, the ancient Ios, they dress

their hair in a treble plait made to stand upright behind the head, after the manner sometimes represented in ancient sculpture, and especially in the small terra-cotta figurines.

The smaller Cyclades are for the most part rocky and bare. For centuries after the fall of Constantinople the Ægean was a perpetual scene of warfare between the rival fleets of the Crescent and the Cross. Barbary corsairs, pirates from Italy and Dalmatia ravaged the ancient sites, cut down the olive-groves, and bore the population away into slavery, and the isles still bear the trace of these long years of desolation. The delicate mountain forms are very lovely still, as they show like pearls and amethysts across the sunrise haze, or when they float like fretted rubies and sapphires at sunset on a milky sea; but within there is a total absence of vegetation, and only in the interior mountain hollows small olives cluster or the stunted Aleppo pine. There is one moment in the early spring when all the terraced heights are covered with the emerald verdure of young corn, and whole slopes are a vermilion blaze of poppies; but the general aspect on the shore is sad, and barren, and brown.

The scantiness of subsistence forces many of the inhabitants to take service on the mainland, where they have a high reputation for thrift, industry, and sobriety, and many islands have developed their own particular industry. Thus the Andros folk are famous as cooks, and Tenos has for many years supplied even Constantinople with nurses. But the majority of the male population are sailors by nature and profession, or engage in the kindred occupations of fishing and diving for

sponges. A great deal of the minor carrying trade is done by little vessels fitted out on the Greek islands, when the owner, the captain, and the sailors all have shares in the venture, the latter generally dividing a half among them in lieu of all other demands. They are as abstemious as their brethren of the mainland, and so little victualling is required that such a venture is started with an expenditure of capital slight enough to defy competition. Bread, cheese, and a few olives are all the islander demands, and it may be that even the ship is borrowed under security, and the hire defrayed out of the profits of the voyage. Consequently, in spite of the unproductiveness of these rocky isles, the people are generally well-to-do, and their villages are better provided than those of the mainland, and are models of order and cleanliness.

The village or group of villages on the smaller islands is generally high up in the interior, and its position is due to the instinct of self-preservation and defence dating from the old corsair days. A few houses may cluster round the little port, where the caïques are moored to the quay, and thence a rough bridle-path mounts up the rocks behind. The hills will all be laboriously terraced, and here and there the slow-growing olive is reasserting its ancient right of tenure. In a nook sheltered from the most prevailing wind you will come upon the white village. Without, is a row of windmills, round towers with five long poles crossed like the spokes of a wheel, to which ten small jib-shaped sails are attached. In the village all is dazzling white. The church is whitewashed from foundation to cupola and cross; the little cube-shaped houses are whitewashed

roof and all, up to the chimneys made of earthenware pots with the bottoms knocked out. The whitening is perpetually renewed, and even the flags in the courtyard are marked out white at the joints. Some houses have little gardens, a few fig-trees, an oleander blossoming, or a trellised vine supported on columns, all dazzling bright and fresh to look upon—a perfect little idyll of white-wash. Within, the houses are as clean and well-ordered as without, the coppers and pans gleam on their shelves, and the floors are evidently well scrubbed. The people look cleanly and prosperous ; and the very dogs, unlike the Molossian of the mainland, are gentle and friendly here.

In conclusion, it remains to say a word about that most distinctive and interesting feature in the population of modern Greece, the race of nomad shepherds, who either as herdsmen earning a wage, or as owners with their own sheep and goats renting the pastures they occupy, wander through the length and breadth of the land. They are all generally known by the name of Vlachs (*Βλάχοι*), though by no means exclusively of Wallach origin. In northern and central Greece they are generally divided in Arvanitóvlachi, or Albanian Vlachs, and Sarakotzanívlachi, a name of which I have not been able to discover the import, unless it perhaps contains the same root as Koutzovlach,[1] the tribe to which most of the Greek Wallachs belong. In the Peloponnese the genuine Wallach is not found, but the shepherds, Greek or Albanian, who occupy the more

[9] In the above description I had especially in my mind the little island of Siphnos ; but these characteristics apply to the Cyclades generally.

[1] See chap. i. p. 38.

limited pasture lands, are also called by the generic title of Vlach.

Whatever their race, however, their manner of life is the same. Their days are spent entirely in the open air, and in wet weather or dry they sleep with their flocks, enveloped in their rough frieze cloaks, on the mountain side. In the summer they explore the higher altitudes, and make their halting-place in the lambing season under some dark vallonea's shade. A blanket stretched over crossed sticks serves as a shelter from the sun, while around lie the churns, milk-pails, and cheese-pans, their only household goods. In the winter they come down to the plains and build themselves a frail hut of twigs or rushes, fencing in some sheltered angle of rock with a rude shelter of brushwood to protect their flocks from the wind and weather—the winter quarters (*χειμερία*) and the fold (*μάνδρι*). The women share their free and roving life, but more often take refuge during winter in the villages. Their diet is of the simplest, being almost exclusively confined to bread in the lambing season, with cheese and curds when the milk can be spared for them, while a little wine and tobacco are their only luxuries. Illness is unknown amongst them, and they generally live to a very great age. Gigantic dogs with shaggy coats follow them over the mountains, alert to the master's voice, and trembling at his least reproof, but ferociously savage to all the world besides. The eyes of these hillsmen are keen as the hawk's, and their voices reach, without effort, from ridge to distant ridge; the goats understand their uncouth cries, and come in response to the call from heights a mile away.

*Greek Shepherd.*

It is a curious sight to watch the shepherds moving camp. One may often see them on a November morning marching round the outskirts of Athens, when they move down from the high pastures of Cithæron to winter in the lower slopes round the foot of Pentelicon: the women accompany the mules, bearing the camp gear, the rugs, and churns, and cauldrons; the goats march in companies two or three hundred strong, flanked by their subalterns, the dogs; the shepherds, like the officers, in their brown hooded cloaks, with their crooks across their shoulders, follow upon each company; and so they move, some thousand strong, with all the regularity of an army. The goats appear to understand perfectly what it all means, and lie down in groups when a signal to halt is given, marshalling themselves in perfect order again when the time comes to move on, and all the air is alive with bells once more.

It is in this folk of the mountains and the open air, living their changeless life apart, with their tanned faun-like faces, and the laughing look in their clear brown eyes under the matted curly hair, that the link with the older world is closest. Their habits, their methods, their very dress have hardly changed; and living face to face as they do with the miracle of nature, the weirdness of mighty forces unaccounted for and the evidence of strange phenomena which they cannot explain, still keep alive in them the mystery of the ancient Pantheism.

# CHAPTER III.

## VILLAGE FESTIVALS.—FAIRS, DANCES, AND MARRIAGES.

THE most important episodes in village life are marriages and deaths, and the annual *Paneguris*, or fair, held on the day of the saint to whom the local church is dedicated. The very name Paneguris suggests an historical connection between the modern festivals and those ancient religious assemblies similarly designated; and were it possible to fix the dates of the latter, we should probably find that they corresponded precisely with the period of the modern celebration, and that, to take a suggestive instance, the annual gathering at the monastery on the summit of Mount Ithome in Messenia is merely a survival of the musical contests of the primitive Ithomæa. In the larger towns the peculiar customs of the people are rapidly disappearing; but every Greek village celebrates its *fête*, and nothing has as yet interfered with the patriarchal picturesqueness of these occasions.

On the eve of the saint's day, the inhabitants of the more distant villages of the neighbourhood come in with their musicians and their store of provisions for the holiday, and each group establishes a little camp to itself. Where the feast is of several days' duration, or the reputation of the saint for miraculous cures is likely to attract a very numerous attendance, tents and booths are erected, and even in some cases, as before the Church of the Virgin in the island of Amorgos,

permanent stone huts have been constructed for use during the Paneguris. Often, again, as in Rhodes and Lesbos, the women are allowed to pass the night in the church, a suggestive reminiscence of the antique custom. On the following morning at daybreak the folk from the nearer villages flock in on mules and donkeys, all dressed in their cleanest kilts, their finest veils and newest aprons, in honour of the saint. Mass is said in the church, and offerings are made according to the custom of the locality and the reputation of the saint for the healing of disease, which may, perhaps, entail on the patient an uninterrupted sojourn of two or three days within the sacred precincts. Then the rustic feast is prepared; lambs are roasted whole on spits, and the resinous wine is consumed in abundance, though scarcely ever to excess. The rest of the day is spent in dancing, in visiting, in listening to the musicians and rhapsodists, now, alas, growing rarer and rarer, or in making purchases at the booths, which are furnished on these occasions with all the stores and furniture their simple wants require.

Of these festivals the most curious are those held at the miracle-working shrines, such as the great Paneguris celebrated twice a year on the island of Tenos, to which the sick and maimed are brought by their kinsmen from all parts of Greece and orthodox Turkey. Others, again, are merely viewed as pleasant holidays, generally held at some chapel or monastery in the country, to which the people flock with the sole object of amusement, after due respect has been paid to the *ikon* of its saint and due contribution made to the church, which has no small interest in the maintenance of these annual gatherings.

The most frequented are those which fall in spring and early summer, when the weather is settled and the evenings are growing long. The traveller will often come upon them unawares. He will pass through a number of apparently deserted villages, and suddenly, as he enters some shady valley, round some little half-ruined thirteenth-century chapel nestling in a clump of plane-trees, he will see the whole area covered with picturesque groups; the mules tethered near, and feeding quietly; while in front of the very church door perhaps, to the sound of the *lyra*, the pipes and the drum, the women are dancing, led by some young *pallikar* in spotless white, linked by his red handkerchief to the many-coloured winding chain of girls.

Thus far of the Paneguris generally. Peculiarities of worship and ceremony incidental to such gatherings will be alluded to later on in their proper place, but I cannot refrain here from mentioning a curious custom which characterizes this festival at Limni, in Eubœa, where I landed one September morning to find the narrow shore, along which the brown houses of the village are huddled together between the green slopes and the sea, alive with a bright crowd moving to and fro between rows of booths, where all the simple necessaries of peasant life were exposed for sale—iron spits and cauldrons, red-leather shoes and brilliant coloured handkerchiefs and counterpanes. A mile or so up the steep mountain road in the interior is a little chapel dedicated to the Virgin, and in the Church of Limni is an *ikon* or picture of the Panaghía invested with a peculiar sanctity. On the first day of the Paneguris this picture is carried from the church to the chapel, and the privilege

of carrying it is supposed to confer especial favour on the bearer throughout the ensuing year. This privilege is accordingly disposed of by auction, at the instance of the priest in church, to the highest bidder, and the Limniotes will offer as much as two hundred drachmas for this distinction. The successful competitor takes the picture in his arms, and runs all the way up the mountain-side, with the crowd following at his heels, while the virtue proceeding from the picture is held to lend speed to his feet. Near the chapel is a spring and a shady grove of plane-trees, and there, after the ceremony, the people encamp and spend the afternoon in dancing, a pastime for which the inhabitants of Eubœa are famous.

The dancing of the peasants is somewhat solemn, and well befits the semi-religious character of these occasions. There is little abandonment to the hilarity of motion, apparently little sensuous pleasure in the common rhythmic step; but the suggestion is ever recurring that some unconscious tradition of an ancient sacred significance preserves the decorum of the dancers. It has even been maintained that in the various local figure-dances traces of some former pantomimic action may be detected; and as each dance in the different localities has its own particular song of accompaniment, this has, perhaps, replaced the narrative or dramatic part, while the dance has taken the place of the mimic representation.

Four principal forms may be distinguished among the many varieties of the popular dance. That called the *Levéntikos*[1] is executed either by two men or two

[1] From Λεβέντης, nimble or quick.

women, who stand side by side, a pace or two apart, looking straight in front of them. They move forward and backward, springing up and round, making long turns, and then coming back to the original position, each following the movements of the other, but always dancing apart. The men frequently accompany their steps with clapping of hands.

The *Syrtos*, a word signifying "drawn along," is danced by men and women in a line; but where there are male dancers the leader is always a man. He holds with his left hand the right of the next dancer, or is linked by a handkerchief; the second in line similarly holds with his or her left hand the right of the next dancer. The chain winds round and round rather solemnly; now one foot is lifted, now the other; and the bodies swing inwards or outwards together, according to the rhythm of the dancing song, or pipes and drum.[2]

The *Clistos*[3] differs from the Syrtos only in the manner in which the chain is linked. The leader has the right hand free, and holds with the left the arm of the second dancer. The second, with his right hand, holds the right hand of the third, and with his left the right hand of the fourth, and so hands are linked across each alternate dancer along the whole line.

The *Tsiámikos* is a dance in which the leader of the line does all the dancing; the rest, who are linked to him by a handkerchief held in his left hand, only follow and keep time, generally singing in accompaniment a martial air. When the leader gets tired, he drops to the end of the line, and the second in order succeeds him.

[2] A note on the dance music will be found in an appendix.

Κλειστὸς = closed.

The leader, who often waves a handkerchief in his free right hand, follows the measure of the pipes or the song moving alternately fast or slow, leaping into the air then at regular intervals passing under his own and his companion's linked hands, and occasionally enlivening the step by falling forward on the knee and springing up with a rebound from the floor. The great art consists in throwing the head as far back as possible without losing balance, and in this the second dancer supports him. Sometimes even, to show his suppleness and agility, he will place a glass of water on his forehead and dance a round without spilling its contents. This is the favourite dance of the soldiers, and they may often be seen engaged in it when the word is given to fall out in the intervals of drill. It is also danced by the Albanians, and its name would seem to imply that it owes its origin to the Tzamé or Schumik tribes.

Of these dances, and especially of the last, there are numberless variations, and each one has its distinctive name; such are the Siganòs, Pediktòs, Soústa, Ankaliastòs, the Tservòs, probably of Slavonic origin, and the Syndetòs and Gonatistòs, which are favourite dances in the islands. In these last the dancers advance with two or three forward steps to the right and one to the left, then retire again, and wind round to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument called the *lyra*. The differences between these various dances are all well defined, and they are looked upon as quite distinct; but the general effect produced is much the same in all.

In Rhodes there is yet another method of forming the line. The girl immediately behind the leader, who

will generally be her future bridegroom, holds fast by his girdle with her right hand. His right is free, holding the handkerchief which he waves, and with his left he takes the right hand of the third in line, the second being linked to the fourth, and so on. On ancient vases discovered in the island a dance extremely similar to this *Rhoditikós* is found represented.

The famous dances at Megara, which are held on Easter Tuesday, and on every subsequent feast-day until the day of St. George (April 23, O.S.), are more elaborate in character. The dances above described may be seen there; but it is the dance of the women known as the *Tratta*, a word of Italian origin, but similar in etymology to *Syrtos*, which has excited so much curiosity. In the morning it may be seen outside the town on a little plateau of hills among the trees, and in the afternoon in the central square of the town. On these occasions the whole population gathers at the dancing place, while numbers of spectators flock in from Athens, Corinth, and all the neighbourhood.

It has been suggested, and with much probability, that this dance, as well as the Syrtos, is a rhythmic adaptation of the familiar action of drawing in the seine net. A row is formed of some twenty women, each linking her hands to the right and left across her immediate neighbour's to those of the dancer next but one; so that here also, as in the *Clistos*, the line is joined together by a chain of crossing arms. The married women dance together, the unmarried women form other chains, and a particularly pretty feature in the festival are the lines of dancing children. The movement is by the right, and the leader, who with her left

hand holds the right of the third dancer, and with her right the right of her neighbour, has to draw the whole line along; the work is very hard, and they often grow tired out under the hot spring sun. There is plenty of rude music of pipes, drums, and fiddles in the square; but these are chiefly engaged in playing the accompaniments of the men who are dancing the handkerchief dance, while the girls and women move to a kind of low twittering song of their own, in time with the step, which sounds like the note of a large company of swallows. The body is turned to the right, and the line advances obliquely with four long rapid steps, all the feet moving together with perfect precision, the points of their red slippers coming rhythmically forward, and all the bodies swinging as one. After the four advancing steps follow three shorter ones backward, and then the line winds round like a snake, always moving by the right, with a moment's pause as the leader and the last dancer stand back to back. The step appears to be extremely simple, not to say monotonous, and yet the precision with which it is accomplished, the simultaneousness of every movement, cannot be easy to acquire; while the general effect of these serpentining chains of linked figures, in their bright dresses and floating veils, advancing, retiring, and winding round, is particularly graceful and pretty. Throughout there is no confusion nor noise; a sense of moderation and restraint prevails. It is a sight not easily forgotten this village festival—for Megara, though it covers a large area, is scarcely more than a big village—the blaze of colour in the skirts and aprons of the women, the red caps and clean white kilts of the

men, the universal participation, the refined and pretty features of the young girls, the handsome bronzed faces of the *pallikars*—and all this in a wonderful setting of mountain, sea, and isles, under the April sun of Greece.

The peasant's dance leads on by a natural sequence to the consideration of the peasant marriage, for not only is dancing one of the characteristic features of wedding festivities, but it is also on the dancing ground, where all the villagers assemble to make holiday, that marriages are most commonly arranged. The social life of the peasants in Greece abounds in symbolism and ceremony, a ceremony which has very often long survived its significance, and in no aspect of it is this more apparent than in the customs which have attached themselves to marriage. They are everywhere extremely elaborate, and differ not a little in different parts according to local and tribal tradition.

Marriages take place at all seasons, except during the month of May ; but they are generally celebrated on a Sunday, and the favourite seasons are the last weeks before Lent, the late autumn after the vintage and the olive gathering, and especially the last Sunday before the Christmas fast begins. In Cyprus, the first Sunday after the full moon is selected, and no marriages take place there during leap-year.

Even in the larger towns such occasions are still marked by a good deal of ceremonial. The wedding gifts, which are generally of a practical kind, are borne round the streets in a procession of carriages, the first of the file containing the bridal bed decked out with flowers. The religious service is more often performed

in the house than in church, at an improvised altar in the middle of the room, radiant with candles, round which stand the priests in gold-embroidered robes, and the bride and bridegroom both crowned with wreaths of orange-blossom. At the close of the ceremony the priest and the newly-married couple join hands and solemnly walk three times round the altar through the incense fumes, while the wedding guests pelt them with sweetmeats, a symbolism which has its origin in antiquity,[4] and which among the peasantry takes the form of the smearing of honey on the lintel of the young bride's door. An important part is played on these occasions by the Koumbáros, as he is called, an influential friend or relative, who, among the poorer people, provides the wedding entertainment, and is saddled with a number of other responsibilities should the wife and children be left destitute. He it is who holds the orange-blossom crowns over the head of the bride and bridegroom until the time comes to put them on, and changes them at the given moment in the ceremonial. The same name of Koumbáros is applied to godfathers by their godchildren, and reciprocally to the godchildren by the godfathers, and is extended to cover all the members of families between which such a tie exists. It acts as a bar on intermarriage, and creates an artificial relationship, which is most solemnly regarded, so that a man of property and influence will often have the whole countryside attached to his interest and service by such a connection.

Marriages are rather a matter of contract and arrangement than of inclination among the peasantry; and,

[4] Καταχύσματα: see "Schol. ad Aristoph.," Plut., 768.

indeed, the rules which govern them spread upward, and have still considerable hold upon the educated and wealthier classes. Such, for instance, is the notion that it is wrong for the sons to marry until all the daughters have been disposed of; and, again, that the latter must marry in order of seniority, so that the younger sister is not entitled to contract an engagement while an elder sister remains single. Under these circumstances, the first and most anxious care of the parents is the provision of a suitable dowry for their daughters, and to this the brothers often contribute by their labour with exemplary devotion, or provide it entirely if the father of the family be dead.

In northern Greece and Epirus the prevailing customs admit of a general description, though there are many slight modifications depending on local usage. When a man has made his choice, and secured the approval of his future bride's parents, a day is immediately fixed for the ceremony of the betrothal, until which the couple must on no account be seen together. Upon the day appointed, the parents on either side meet in the house of the priest, where the young girl is introduced, veiled, by two of her friends, and presented to her future husband, who leads her up to the priest. The priest blesses them, and rings are exchanged in his presence, after which the obligation not to meet nor converse until the wedding day is re-imposed. When the day fixed for the marriage draws near, the invited guests and relatives send presents, consisting generally of a goat, a sheep, or a lamb dressed out with ribands, as their contribution to the wedding fare. On the eve of the ceremony the parents on either side provide a banquet

for their guests; and in the house of the bridegroom, at any rate, this banquet is prolonged all through the night; the pipers and musicians attend, and many songs are sung till day-break, when the young man, escorted by his friends, sets out to fetch the bride. The bride, meanwhile, is dressed by her girl friends, who accompany the robing, hairdressing and veiling with appropriate songs; she then takes formal leave of her parents and her home, and as the procession sets out for the bridegroom's house, on foot if it be in the same village, or on horse or mule back if it be at a distance, the wedding songs are sung:—

> "To-day the sky is fair,
> And bright to-day the morning;
> To-day they hold their wedding,
> The eagle and the dove.

Or, again—

> "I leave a 'farewell' for my village, a 'farewell' for my kin;
> And I leave for my mother three phials of bitter savour;
> From one she will drink at morning, from the second one at noon,
> And the bitterest one of all, the third, she will taste on holidays."

The priest is fetched, and heads the train with the Koumbáros or the Paranymphos, the bridegroom's best man (for the old name has survived), and they proceed to church for the religious ceremony, unless it be performed in the house of the bride. From church they return to the husband's house, and all sit down to the table except the bride, who remains standing and veiled in the deferential attitude which is considered becoming in a bride, until a certain point in the feast, where the Paranymphos goes up to her and removes the veil. At the marriage-banquets of the ancients it would appear that all the women sat at a separate table with the bride still veiled amongst them. The banquet is followed by

dances and much firing-off of guns and squibs. The ceremonial ends with a curious custom the second or third day after the wedding, when the friends and relatives of the newly-married couple escort them in state to the village spring or fountain. The bride here throws sweetmeats into the water, and fills a new jar, after which the day is kept as a holiday and dances take place round the spring.

In the villages of Mount Pelion the local custom presents certain interesting peculiarities. In the first place, marriages are arranged between two families by a third person as intermediary, related to neither house. The priest is therefore generally selected, and conducts the necessary bargain as to the amount of dowry which will form a sufficient inducement to the bridegroom. The latter is not bound here by the obligation which elsewhere prevails to refrain from speaking to his future bride until the wedding day. On the Thursday before the Sunday fixed for the marriage the formal ceremony of publicly kneading the wedding loaves takes place both in the house of the bride and bridegroom. The bridegroom's male relatives and friends who conduct the festivities on his behalf are known by the name of Vràtimi, and one of these, whose father and mother are both alive, is selected to knead the dough, while the others standing round throw into the kneading-trough presents of money, which become his property. On Friday morning the bride and bridegroom partake of the communion together, and Saturday is spent in feasting in the houses of the two families concerned. On the morning of Sunday the bride's friends bear her presents to the bridegroom, while she receives his in

similar fashion; these presents consisting generally of articles of dress to be worn at the ceremony. Then the Vràtimi repair once more to the bride's house to fetch the dowry and household gear, which is loaded on the backs of mules amid much discharge of guns, while the bride's mother throws upon each load a piece of raw cotton, a custom which is repeated by the bridegroom's mother on their arrival at his house. This is, perhaps, symbolical of future abundance in the fruits of the soil; and if no very satisfactory explanation is forthcoming, we may point to the analogous custom found in Laconia and elsewhere of throwing cotton seed upon a newly-married couple. The actual crowning of the bride here takes place in her future home, to which she is conveyed with the usual state, to the sound of pipes and musical instruments.

In the Morea the usage is tolerably similar, but of course the nearer to the highway and the withering touch of civilization, the less rigidly the old formalities are observed. At a little village in the neighbourhood of Sparta I noted two or three customs that were particularly characteristic, such as, for instance, that after the crowning, which here takes place in the house of the bride's father, the newly-married couple take their stand on a high wooden press, or on the sofa, if there be one, while the rest of the company surround them singing songs or making speeches in their honour, to which they frequently bow their acknowledgments. Rice and cotton seed are thrown over them on their departure; and upon their arrival at the bridegroom's cottage, his mother stands waiting at the door holding a glass of honey and water in her hand. From this glass

the bride must drink, that the words of her lips may become sweet as honey; while the lintel of the door is smeared with the remainder, that strife may never enter in; and in the meantime one of the company breaks a pomegranate on the threshold.

The symbolism of the honey, which recurs in many places, has a curious parallel in the ancient law of Solon, which prescribed that a newly-married couple upon entering the bridal chamber should eat a quince together, in order that their conversation might ever be sweet as the savour of the fruit. The use of honey is no doubt as old or older, and probably the marriage custom differed in its details from valley to valley in ancient days much as it does now, while preserving a general uniformity.

The usage of prolonging the banquet through the night until the wedding morning seems to be universal. While travelling once on a November night from Pyrgos to Patras, I halted at Gastouni, a village of Elis, to rest the horses. From a cottage by the roadside came the lively sound of pipes and beating of drums, and, impelled by curiosity as to what such strains might portend in a quiet village at an hour long after midnight, I opened the door with some hesitation. It was a two-roomed cottage, and in the outer chamber a broad table was spread with many meats and a host of wine-bottles, while round it sat some twenty peasants in their white kilts and goatskin cloaks, for the night was very cold. The proprietor was a well-to-do peasant from Sparta, and his son was to be married the next day. The old mother was busy with much serving, and her pretty daughter, who was assisting her, was the only other

woman present. In a corner two gipsies from the neighbouring village of Trajano were blowing on shrill wooden pipes as if their cheeks would burst, producing a wild and piercing sound like that of many bagpipes, while a third was beating a drum. The pipes and the music were exactly similar to the instruments and airs one hears among the Egyptian villages, and in the narrow space the noise was literally deafening. I was made welcome, and accommodated with a seat at the board. "Come and make merry," they cried; "we have lots to eat and lots to drink;" and thereupon the old lady divided little cubes of meat imperfectly cooked and much spiced, and impaling them on the first steel fork which came to hand, and which had already done duty for several hours, presented them to my unwilling lips, while my tumbler was kept constantly replenished with resinous wine. The pipes screamed louder and louder; the barbaric music excited the wedding guests, who rose and swayed their bodies like dervishes to the air, clinking their glasses and joining in a wild chorus. Then each of them in turn, as the impulse seized him, rose, and pulling a hundred-drachma note from his pocket, folded it, and inserted it between the gipsy's red cap and his forehead, till a fringe of them surrounded his head. At last there was a breathing space of silence, and the notes were transferred to the piper's pockets. This process, like the filling of our glasses, was repeated several times, and the wealth and lavish expenditure of the community surprised me not a little, until I afterwards learned that a strict account is kept by each of what he has given, and that in the cooler air of morning the money is returned, and one per cent. only retained by

the gipsies. It would seem, therefore, that there is a good deal of vanity displayed in paying the piper. At the same time it is difficult not to imagine that when the drinking continues with the lanterns until dawn, there may arise some slight confusion in the accounts, to the obvious benefit of the musicians. It was past one o'clock when I arrived, and they had only just got to the dessert; the next day, (Sunday), they said, after the ceremony the feast would be resumed, and Monday also would be spent as a holiday. The scene was a bright but strange one: the old mother dancing before me with flowing glasses in her hand, the quick welcome and ready hospitality, the costume of the wedding guests, and the wild physiognomy of the pipers in that little cottage room, with the cold November stars burning outside. The next day at Patras it seemed as if all the world were being married, for it was the eve of the long fast which precedes Christmas, and in every street I met wedding processions headed by the priest and the Koumbáros on their way to fetch the bride.

It is interesting to compare with the usages described the customs prevailing in some of the islands, and especially in those in which, under the Turkish domination, the manners and population are essentially Greek.

In Rhodes, the wedding ceremony begins with an exchange of presents; the bridegroom sends his bride a skirt, a braided jacket, a pair of shoes, and a veil embroidered with gold, and receives in return a silken shirt, and a tobacco pouch embroidered by her own hands. The bride is then solemnly dressed by her friends in the bridal clothes sent by the bridegroom; her hair is cut in front so as only to cover half the

forehead, while the rest is plaited into several small plaits hanging down behind; then the veil is put on, and the palms of her hands are anointed with cinnamon. After this musicians are introduced, who accompany their strains with pantomimic gestures, passing their instruments over the head of the bride, while those present throw money to them. Much the same, in the meantime, takes place in the bridegroom's house, after which the two parties proceed to the church, and are thence solemnly conducted to the new dwelling, which constitutes the dowry of the bride. The husband on arriving dips his finger in a cup of honey and traces a cross over the door, while those present cry aloud, "Be good and sweet as this honey is." A pomegranate is placed on the threshold, which the young husband crushes with his foot as he enters, followed by his wife, over whom the wedding guests throw corn and cotton seeds and orange-flower water. Within, he takes his place on a chair in the middle of the room, the bride sitting on a pile of cushions set against the wall, while the musicians again surround them, singing their praises, and passing the instruments over their heads. The bride then kneels and kisses the hands of her husband's father and mother, after which she is conducted to a neighbouring house, where food is prepared for her, while the girls sing to the clashing of a kind of rude cymbal. At night the dancing begins, and festivities continue during two whole days. The patron saint of the new house is not forgotten, and the water on which floats the oil in the lamp before his *ikon* is replaced by wine. After the wedding, it is usual to send to all the wedding guests a cake made with honey and sesame.

[5] Biliotti et Cottret, "L'Ile de Rhodes."

As far away as the distant island of Cyprus we shall find the same general forms prevailing, with one or two very individual features which are, perhaps, not to be found elsewhere. Here when two families of the peasantry have agreed on a marriage alliance, the future bridegroom and his parents are entertained by the parents of the bride, and the father welcomes them to table with a distich, which may be rendered :

> "My friends are welcome here from miles and miles away,
> A thousand, thousand ducats less dear to me than they."

To which the bridegroom's father replies :

> "We come to eat and drink with you,
> Your love to win, and love bestow."

At this banquet the future bride does not appear. A few days later the ceremony of betrothal takes place, and a formal contract is drawn out, in which the amount of the bride's dowry, as well as the property which the young man will receive from his father, is specified.

Some days before the wedding the women and girls of the village assemble at the spring or river side, and there takes place a solemn washing of the fabric of the marriage bed. The great antiquity of this custom as a preliminary of the wedding festival is, perhaps, suggested by a line in the "Odyssey," where on that famous washing-morning in Phæacia, Nausicaa, in craving her father's permission, makes the raiment of her brothers the plea for her expedition to the river side.

> αἴδετο γὰρ θαλερὸν γάμον ἐξονομῆναι
> πατρὶ φίλῳ.[6]

The filling of the mattress of the marriage bed is also

[6] "Od." vi. 66, "For she shrank from speaking of her own ripe marriage to her father dear."

a ceremony performed in the presence of the assembled friends and kinsmen, who throw pieces of money into the stuffing, which remain there until a year has elapsed, when the mattress is ripped open, and the money put to use. On the Saturday before the crowning, the solemnity of bathing the bride and bridegroom takes place in their respective houses—a custom also universally observed by the ancients, who employed for this purpose the water of particular springs, such as the fountain of Kallirrhoë at Athens.[7]

Two curious episodes mark the progress of the bridegroom to the house of the bride on the wedding morning. If he belong to the same village, he is carried there by his friends, who, crossing arms and joining hands, form a kind of chair, on which he sits; if, on the other hand, he come from a distance, he and all his retinue arrive on horseback. The young men of the bride's village go out to meet them, and attempt to tear him from his horse; his friends endeavour to ward off the attack, and often the horseplay degenerates into serious earnest. Should he be dismounted, his comrades carry him into the village on their shoulders, or in the manner alluded to above; but it is their ambition that he should, if possible, ride up to where his bride awaits him, and his triumph is not to draw bridle till safe in the court of her house. As he is about to pass in, a fowl is brought and held down by head and feet upon the threshold of the door; the bridegroom takes an axe, cuts off the head, and only then may enter.[8]

[7] Thuc., ii. 15.

[8] Sakellarios, *Κυπρίακα*. Athens, 1890.

Thus from island to island we shall find an infinite number of local usages and traditions modifying the general uniformity of the ancient rite, while in every region the popular muse has stamped a different individuality upon the lyrics and songs which accompany each stage of the proceedings. I will quote but one more instance from the island of Skarpanto (Carpathos), which lies half way between Rhodes and Crete, and which, like its greater neighbours, received a Dorian colony. The interesting feature of the ceremonial here is the progress of the bridegroom to the house of the bride on the wedding morning. A girl precedes him carrying a vessel of water containing some aromatic herb, a reminiscence probably of the old lustral solemnity which still survives in Cyprus. Arrived at the door of her house, he is greeted by the mother of the bride, who touches the nape of his neck with a censer containing incense, a proceeding which is said by the islanders to symbolize prosperity in husbandry. She further gives him a present, called *embatikion*—that is to say, "the gift of in-going"—and then places on the threshold a rug or blanket folded, with a stick resting on one of the corners. The bridegroom advances his right foot, breaks the stick, and passes in; and this is said to symbolize the future submission of the wife.

The kindred manners of the Albanians and their capacity for assimilating Hellenic usages have been alluded to, and this portion of the subject would therefore be incomplete without a brief description of the ceremonies prevailing among the Christian Albanians of the Orthodox creed, which, it will be observed, resemble the Greek very closely, with the important distinction

that the women, as a rule, receive no dowries, and that the bridegroom, as it were, purchases his bride.

Marriages are arranged by the parents, and on the Saturday before the wedding the bridegroom sends his betrothed her trousseau and a sum of money, which is practically the price for which she is purchased, and in virtue of which he becomes her absolute master. The wedding itself is celebrated on Sunday. On the previous Monday corn is ground for the wedding banquet, while songs and salvoes of firing accompany the procession to the mill. On the Thursday the wood for the fires is solemnly brought in, and the baking of cakes takes place : the dough must be kneaded by a young girl whose parents are both alive, and special songs accompany this ceremony. A curious feature in this part of the proceedings is that one of the girls is selected to represent the bridegroom, and puts on his clothes and weapons. She pursues the real bridegroom, and tries to smear his face with dough ; while he and his friends throw pieces of money into the kneading-trough, which fall to her lot to keep. When work is over, dancing begins. On the Saturday the bridegroom's nearest relatives join him, each contributing a lamb to the feast, and dancing and carousing are continued throughout the day and night. Meanwhile, all is quiet in the bride's house.

Early on Sunday the guests assemble at the bridegroom's, each bringing bread, wine, and a small money contribution to the wedding banquet. Then they repair in procession to the bride's house, the Pappas walking in front, or riding on a mule if the distance be great ; the women close the train, leading a horse or mule decked

out for the bride, while songs in her honour are sung on the way. The bride's mother receives them at the door, where the bridegroom kisses her hand; then she sprinkles him with water from a vessel held for the purpose, with a dipper made of flowers. She also gives him a handkerchief, which she places on his left shoulder, giving a similar present also to the *Vlam*, the bridegroom's friend or best man. The men then go to a chamber, apart, where a meal is prepared for them, while the bride is dressed by the women in another. Last of all, the Vlam goes in to the bride, and puts on her girdle and her shoes. And hereupon occurs a curious feature in the ceremony. The Vlam has to steal two spoons or other objects, which are placed ready for him, and which are duly restored later on. This would seem to suggest either a reminiscence of the ancient forcible abduction of the bride, or represents the propitiation of Nemesis during the general rejoicings by some tangible loss.

Then the procession is reorganized, and all proceed to the bridegroom's house, the Vlam attending the bride, to see that she does not fall off her horse. On arriving, particular care is taken that the threshold should be crossed with the right foot foremost. The bride is unveiled by the Vlam, the veil being lifted with some silver instrument, such as the handle of a dagger or yataghan, whereupon the wedding ceremony and the crowning of the bride and bridegroom follow according to the rites of the Orthodox Church. During the meal which ensues, the bride stands with bowed head and crossed arms in a corner of the room. The afternoon is spent in singing and dancing, and the bride remains with the women in the evening.

On the Monday the wedding guests witness the symbolical eating of bread and honey together by the bride and bridegroom, and then a procession is formed to the village well, where they sprinkle one another with water. On this day the bridegroom entertains his father-in-law, and on the following day is feasted by him in return, together with the chief wedding guests. The wedding ceremony is then closed, but custom requires that the wife should be excused from all heavy work during the first year of her marriage.[9]

The marriages of the mountain shepherds, and especially of the genuine Vlachs, exhibit a curious survival from remote antiquity, when, like the Sabine maidens, brides were carried off by force. A large party strongly armed come down to fetch the bride, and a concerted show of resistance to her abduction is made—guns are fired, and there is much display of mimic battle, till at length the willing bride is borne off on horseback, surrounded by her suitor's comrades; whence comes a proverb often quoted in Greece, "*Drive on, and never mind my tears!*"

The various races, Greek, Albanian, and Wallach, marry severally among their own folk, and mixed marriages are rare. The chastity of the peasantry is extreme, the family tie strong, and women are generally well-treated, though a considerable portion of the heavy work falls to their share, which tends to age them prematurely; while divorce, so prevalent in the upper class, and rendered so facile by the Church, is quite unknown in village life.

[9] Hahn, "Albanesische Studien."

# CHAPTER IV.

## BIRTH, DESTINY, AND DEATH.

In this and the following chapters I propose to deal with a number of ideas and superstitions which constitute the real spiritual equipment of the people in Greece. In the greater number of them the connection with the old pagan mode of thought will be sufficiently apparent. Some are disguised under a thin veil of Christian assimilation, but many still wear the classic garb unaltered. They are, no doubt, for the most part superstitions which are common to all primitive people, and which constitute among them the genuine popular religion; but a special interest attaches to them here, because they have retained so vividly that individual form in which the ideality of the ancient Greek enveloped them, and in which they have become familiar to us. That the Church in Greece to-day still has a strong hold upon the people, there is no doubt; but it is rather as a disciplinary and national institution than as a spiritual force. The ignorance of the clergy is so great that it would be idle to expect of the people even a rudimentary understanding of the intent of doctrines to which they all subscribe. The result is a curious mixture of Christian symbolism with pagan tradition, an unconscious effort to harmonize inherited superstition with the dogma of authority. The peasant observes his fasts strictly, abstains from manual labour on the days prescribed, believes implicitly in the miraculous power of

his patron saint and the *ikon* in which his presence is localized; but the human saint is the limit of his spiritual capacity; and much as he would shudder at the accusation of any taint of paganism, the ruling of the Fates is more immediately real to him than Divine Omnipotence, and the sunless Hades than the kingdom of Heaven.

The Greek child at birth is surrounded by an environment of spiritual influences, and evil spirits, on the look-out for the control of its destiny, abound in the house in which a woman has just been delivered of a child. These are most readily rendered innocuous by fire, and at night, therefore, the house should only be entered after flame has been touched by the hand. From sunrise to sunset the outer doors must be kept closed for fear of the Nereids,[1] who are sure to be abroad on such an occasion, and anxious to exchange one of their own offspring for a human child. The newly-born infant is subjected to a very singular treatment, being washed in luke-warm wine with myrtle leaves, after which it is generally covered with a layer of salt. This is, however, probably rather sanitary than symbolical in intention. When the salt is being washed off, money is thrown into the water by the relatives, and becomes the perquisite of the midwife.

In the island of Rhodes an elaborate ceremonial may still be witnessed. On the eighth day after birth the child is subjected to a final aromatic bath of wine and myrtle leaves, and is then for the first time placed by the midwife in a cradle surrounded by a number of lighted tapers; its lips are touched with honey by another child, who must, according to prescribed usage, be the eldest of a family, saying, "Be thou as sweet as this honey."

[1] Nereids, see chap. vii.

The midwife then comes forward with a loaf of bread under the left arm, and a censer in her right hand; the infant is placed in her arms, and she advances three times to the door, exchanging good-byes and being welcomed back anew, on behalf of the child, by those who take part in the ceremony. She then incenses the *ikons* throughout the house, and restores the child to its mother; after which, collecting the tapers which were burning round the cradle, she makes three crosses out of them; one is hung over the door, one by the bedside, and one under the *ikon*—from this moment the mother takes over the exclusive care of the infant.[2]

In Cyprus, at the conclusion of a somewhat similar procedure, the nurse solemnly carries the infant round the hearth, on which a fire is expressly lighted. Here also when the infant's first tooth appears the friends of the family assemble, songs are sung celebrating the event, and the child is bathed in water and boiled wheat. After which thirty-two of the boiled grains are strung upon a thread, and stitched to its cap or bonnet, to propitiate the cutting of the teeth.[3]

In Athens, among the poorer classes, it is customary to cover the newly-born child with a dress made from an old shirt of the father's; while under the pillow is placed a black-handled knife, a gold coin, and a gospel in the case of a boy, or ornaments and jewels if it be a girl, significant of the gifts that life should bring—courage, and wealth, and piety. The mother is also subjected to a somewhat tyrannical discipline. For forty days she must not be seen; then, after a bath,

[2] Biliotti et Cottret, "L'Ile de Rhodes."

[3] Sakellarios, Κυπρίακα.

taken with much ceremonious detail, she goes to church—a relic of the ancient rule for purification. The day upon which she may first get up is definitely prescribed, as well as the manner in which her hair should be dressed; and when she does rise, it is proper that she should lean at first upon an iron spit, while for a long time silence is imposed upon her, "lest the Fates should snatch her speech." These customs are none the less rigidly observed because the origin of many of them is lost.[4]

Soon after the birth of the child appear the Fates, under their ancient name of *Moirai*, to determine, like the fairies of Northern lore, the fortunes of its life. They are generally supposed to be three in number, though it would appear that in the island of Zante they are held to be twelve, while one of them has the especial attribute of the Queen of the Fates.[5] They are conceived as wrinkled old women dressed in black, who inhabit mountain tops, and, according to one tradition, the summit of Olympus. They are also frequenters of caves and grottoes, and there especially invoked under one of their attributes, of which more hereafter. The most universal superstition with regard to the Moirai, and that still prevalent

[4] The christening generally takes place before a week has elapsed. Baptism, according to the Orthodox Church, involves complete immersion three times; and the priests are especially instructed how to hold the child, so as to cover the mouth and nostrils with the fingers while it is dipped in the font. After immersion, the child is passed through the air in the form of a cross, and confirmed by anointment with consecrated oil. The godfather is variously called in different parts Koumbáros Anadochos, or Nonos (godmother, Nona), and the relationship involved extends to the whole family of the godchild.

[5] See "Volksleben der Neugriechen," by Dr. Bernhard Schmidt, who made a special study of the folklore of Zante.

in Athens, is their appearance on the third night after the child's birth, to decide upon the course of its life. In some parts, however, it was observed by Pouqueville, they are expected on the fifth day; and in certain islands their advent is postponed until the seventh. In Epirus a distinct function is assigned to each of the three; one bestows fortune, another misfortune, while the third spins the thread which determines the length of life.

Although the period of their visitation seems to differ in different districts, the manner of receiving them appears to be universally similar. The dogs must be tied up, and superfluous furniture should be removed in order that they may not trip. Moreover, the mother must not be left alone about the time when they are due, for the Fates are ever envious of child-bearing, and might do her an injury. They are propitiated by a banquet; cakes, honey, sweetmeats, bread, and wine, all or some of these are spread upon a table on the night prescribed; while in Corfu gold is also displayed, as though even Fate could be amenable to corruption.

In the island of Kassos three lamps are also lit upon the table, one for the Baptist, one for the Virgin, and one for the Saviour, which is probably an instance of the superimposition of a Christian application on the three lamps originally lighted in honour of the three Fates, who are then supposed to enter in.

On these occasions if the Moirai are mentioned at all, it is only with honeyed speech, that they may not be offended; and it is, perhaps, owing to their proximity, and the *vis maligna* which they are apt to exercise, that all allusion to the beauty or strength of the child is

carefully avoided; or if the word should slip out unawares, it is immediately atoned for by one of the traditional expiatory formulæ. The destiny of the child is supposed to be written by the Moirai on the nose or forehead, and any little mark or abrasion of the skin found there is taken as evidence of the writing, and called *τὸ μοίρωμα τῶν Μοιρῶν*, "the fating of the Fates." What once has been written (*τὸ γραμμένο*) has rarely been reversed, nor do they ever spin the lot of a wholly happy life.

Nevertheless, there is another aspect of the Fates who preside over marriage and childbirth, under which they are invoked in caves and grottoes, which would seem to imply the belief that in this respect they are amenable to prayer and propitiation, though it is, perhaps, rather with interrogation as to the future that women approach them than with invocation to change the doom assigned. A custom, which is not quite extinct, is described by writers of the last century and the beginning of this as generally prevalent among unmarried girls, of offering cakes made of honey in caves to the Moirai, with a view to hastening marriage. Pausanias relates that among the Sykionians honey was used as a libation in sacrificing to the Eumenides, and similarly on the altars of the Moirai.[6] Athens has now become so large a capital and so subject to Western influences that the old world superstitions are more rarely met with, but former travellers describe such invocations to the Moirai with offerings of honey, salt, and bread, made especially on nights of the new moon, in the neighbourhood of the Panathenaic Stadium, or near the rock spring in the

[6] Paus., "Cor." chap. ii.

Ilissus bed known as the fountain of Kallirhoë. In connection with these localities it is interesting to notice that on one of the heights which form the sides of the Stadium, there stood, according to Philostratus, a temple of Fortune; while, with regard to the latter, Pausanias describes a temple of Aphrodite "in the gardens," near the Ilissus, as you proceed from the columns of Olympian Zeus—that is to say, close by the fountain—in which there was an inscription alluding to Aphrodite as the oldest of the Fates.[7] The intimate connection between Aphrodite and these deities is established by various inscriptions, by a fragment of Epimenides,[8] and especially by the Orphic Hymn, where she is described as their ruler, and again as the "Mother of Necessity." A similar cult observed by Pouqueville in a cavern on the slopes of Mount Rigani in Ætolia, where the Moirai are propitiated with honey cakes, recalls the mention by Pausanias of a cave near Naupaktos, in which Aphrodite was worshipped, and more especially entreated by widows who desired to be married again.[9] Dodwell also witnessed such an offering of cakes to the Moirai in the rock chambers under the Museum Hill at Athens, popularly known as the prison of Socrates, which are now closed with gates, so that these female votaries are perforce excluded; and he deeply scandalized his attendant by removing the delicacy in question, and giving it to the donkey which had carried his camera obscura up the hill. Wordsworth,[1] again, observed a similar rite in a grotto near the village of Kephissia,

[7] Paus., "Att.," chap. xix.
[8] Schol. Soph., Œd. Col. 42.
[9] Paus., "Phoc.," chap. xxxviii.
[1] Athens and Attica, chap. xxx.

where the falling of a pebble from the roof was supposed to signify the acceptance of a prayer by the Fates.

These are the principal functions of the Destinies, according to popular tradition in Greece. The reappearance at the deathbed is more rare, though a picturesque superstition is found in Zante, that when a man dies, "his Moirai" sorrow for him, and put on the dark dress of mourning.

Side by side with the notion of a dominant Fate directing the course of human life, is found in many parts of the country the conception common to most Christian peoples of an angel in charge of the soul, which is warned or encouraged by this spiritual influence. One is at once reminded of the demon of Socrates, the genius of the Romans, and the guardian angel of the Christians. This angel, the good angel, as he is called, is frequently found contrasted with and struggling against an opposing influence—the bad angel, or sometimes the devil himself; and the same idea is perhaps implied by the common expression of the good or evil "shadow." Sometimes the good angel is permanently scared away, and the destiny of the man is left in sole charge of his darker genius. Very universal is the idea that in the hour of death the angel becomes visible to the dying man, and a number of phrases are found in different districts for the agony of death which refer to this belief: such as "he sees his angel,"[2] or, again, "his angel shadows him."[3] After death the angel takes the soul, which resides in the interior of the body,[4] and issues forth

[2] In Cerigo and Kythnos.

[3] In Crete, Rhodes, and Cyprus.

[4] Whence the popular phrase for a pain in the stomach, *μὲ πονεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου*—literally, "my soul hurts me."

from the mouth, as in the Homeric poems, to bear it away. The soul retains the form which the body wore in life, and not unfrequently has wings; or, again, it takes the form of a small winged child,[5] or even that of a butterfly. It is borne by the angels over the spots which it has known in life, and its good and evil deeds are revealed to it; and, according to a Cypriote song, after remaining with the angel forty days, it is carried into the presence of God. But more commonly it is the archangel Michael whose duty it is to convey the departed into the presence of their Maker; and his appearance and equipment, as he is represented in religious pictures, prove him to be the direct successor of the ancient Hermes Psychopompos.

Such are some of the popular notions with regard to death, which, in spite of the direct reminiscence of antiquity in the last mentioned and the faint echo of the Psyche myth, are shared by the Greeks in common with most simple Christian folk, and suggest the influence of the Church working on the old traditions. But co-existent with these in strange confusion, and of far more general prevalence in the popular attitude towards death and the after life, are a number of ideas directly connected with the grimmer conceptions of the ancient world.

Of these the most important and the most widely disseminated are the superstitions connected with Charos, or Charontas, whose name is of course identical with Charon.[6] But it is no longer as the boatman of the forgetting river, who

"Batte col remo qualunque s'adagia,"

[5] At Arachova and in Zante. Schmidt, "Volksleben der Neugriechen."

[6] Compare the analogy of the substitution of δράκος for δράκων in certain dialects of the modern language.

that Charon reappears in the popular tradition, but rather as the angel of death, and the agent of Divine Omnipotence. His character as the direct emissary of the Deity is illustrated in a popular song, where the following lines occur :—

> "O Charos, I beseech thee, and I entreat thee, God,
> To grant me yet ten other years to live."[7]

or, again, where the line is put into his own mouth :

> "For God has sent me hither to take thy soul away."[8]

The identification of Charon with Thanatos occurs more than once in classical authors,[9] and the conception of the ferryman of Styx is unknown to Homer ; so that it is not impossible that we have here surviving in popular superstition a still older and less complex idea. He is pictured in the folk-poetry and folk-language as an old man, sorrowful of face, and inexorable in melancholy austerity ; like the Walkyre of the Norsemen, or the rider of the pale horse in the Apocalypse, he is constantly alluded to as on horseback—

> "I see Charos approaching on horseback through the fields ;
> Black he is, and black his raiment, black the horse he rides on,
> And black the flowers are that spring up at his side."[1]

Or, again, in that remarkable poem admired and translated by Goethe, which is quoted in full on page 286, where the *vis maligna* of his presence casts a shadow and a weirdness upon the mountains as he rides across them, driving the young before him, leading the old behind,

[7] Lelekos, "Demotiké Anthología," p. 151.

[8] Chasioti's "Collection of Popular Songs."

[9] Cp. Bianor (1st century A.D.) in the Greek Anthology.

> Πάντα Χάρων ἄπληστε, τί τὸν νέον ἥρπασας αὔτως
> Ἄτταλον ; οὐ σὸς ἔην, κἂν θάνε γηραλέος ;

[1] Lelekos, "Epidorpion," p. 189.

with the little dead children slung at his saddle-bow. He is dressed in sable garments, and bears a sword to strike with;[2] and sometimes, like "far-darting" Apollo or Artemis, he has his quiver full of arrows. Again, he appears as a hero in strength and stature, wrestling with human nerve and sinew, and using craft if necessary to overcome; or as a monster in size and appearance, dark of visage, like the black Thanatos of Euripides,[3] with the flashing eyes which Virgil,[4] doubtless quoting popular tradition, as was his wont, attributed to Charon—

> "The sun flashed in his hair, the lightning in his eyes."[5]

Or again—

> "Like lightning flashed his glance, his skin was hue of fire,
> Two mountains were his shoulders, and like a tower his head."[6]

He has, moreover, a Protean power of metamorphosis, and appears at times in the form of an eagle, a swallow, or a snake. In a fresco in the monastery of Vatopedion on Mount Athos is a representation of Charos, as is indicated by the inscription beneath, in the form of a skeleton with a scythe upon his shoulder, where he is thus incorporated among the ministers of the Christian Deity, just as Dante in the "Inferno," and Michael-angelo in the Sistine Chapel, included the ferryman of Hades in their visions of Judgment.[7] Far rarer are instances in the popular poetry of his appearance as a boatman, though traces of such a conception are said to exist in the island of Zante, and a Greek author has

[2] Cp. Eurip., "Alkestis," 843.

[3] Troad, 1315.

[4] "Stant lumina flamma," Æn. vi. 300.

[5] [6] Passow, Carmina Popularia.

[7] Politis, Μελετὴ περὶ τοῦ βίου τῶν νεωτέρων Ἑλλήνων, B., p. 256.

described the myth of the ferryman as still surviving among certain Greeks of Asia Minor, who, moreover, placed between the lips of the dead a coin which they call *πειρατίκιον*, signifying "passage-money."[8] There exists, it is true, among the Mainotes a song in which Charos is represented as a boatman,[9] but in this instance he has none of his ancient characteristics; and the conception is easily accounted for in the wild peninsula, the only passes into which were perpetually blockaded, so that the inhabitants, engaged in seafaring and piratical pursuits, would more naturally figure Charos as arriving by sea than as riding over their pathless mountains.

A reminiscence of the ancient mistrust of Nemesis is found in the Charos legends; it is ill to speak lightly of him, or to take too great pride in one's strength, to glory in youth and health, and to defy his might. A little bird bears the word to his ear, and he is tempted to put it to the proof forthwith.[1] Sometimes he measures his strength with the strong in jumping matches or wrestling bouts, which almost always end in the same way, though in the Cretan version of a song which is otherwise nearly identical with one found by Fauriel in Thessaly, he spares a young shepherd who has wrestled well with him, because his wedding crowns are still hanging in the Church, and even Charos honours the love of married life.[2] This, however, is one of the few instances to be found in the Charos songs in which he is moved by prayer; inexorable he is as the law of nature

[8] Schmidt, "Volksleben der Neugriechen," p. 237.

[9] Translated on p. 283.

[1] See the poem translated on p. 280, "Charos and the Maiden."

[2] This poem, as well as the Thessalian version, is translated on pp. 281, 282.

he represents: "deaf and hearing not," "cruel," "crafty," "a subtle thief," "a prince of Klephts." Grimmest of all is the picture given of him in the Cyprian songs of the hero Digenis, the old man of eighty years who wrestled with Charos for life; and where Death gripped, the blood flowed; where Digenis gripped, bones were broken; so three days and nights they wrestled, till Digenis had the mastery, and he opened his arms and gave praise to God. But Charos is rebuked by God, "I sent thee to take life, and not to wrestle"; he therefore has recourse to craft, and taking the form of a golden eagle, lights on the head of Digenis, and driving the talons through his skull, draws out the soul that way.[3]

In the Ionian islands Charos is sometimes spoken of as married; his wife is called Charontissa; and there exists an old song which gives a grimly grotesque picture of their table, spread with its feast at sunset: the linen is black instead of white, the plates are upside down, the service is performed by the severed hands of the brave, and children's heads are piled high upon the board.

Among Athenian *Paramythia*, or folk-stories, such as have been collected from the mouths of old women, and thus saved from oblivion, is a curious and picturesque one in which Charos figures in the character of Koumbáros, and as such recognizes the obligation to do a good turn to the family with which he is thus connected.

"The children of a couple who had celebrated their marriage in May in violation of usage and tradition, did not live. Four had

[3] Sakellarios, "Kypriaka." Legends and songs of the hero Digenis are found in nearly every part of Greeee, but most of all in Cyprus. They are perhaps scattered fragments of a long epic history.

already died, and when the fifth was born, they resolved to choose the first passer-by as his Koumbáros. So seeing first by chance an old man in rags, they called him in, and he duly went through the necessary formalities, and disappeared. One day, some years later, the husband came upon him, and asked him why he had never seen him in the meantime. 'It had been better,' replied the Koumbáros, 'if you had not seen me now: I am Charos.' He was then entreated by the husband to reveal when he meant to take him; so Charos led him to a solitary church, where he showed him a great number of lamps, some of which had much, and others but little oil in them, while others again were at their last flicker. "Every man,' said Charos, 'has his lamp.' Then he perceived that his son's lamp was full of oil, and that his own contained but little. So he said, 'Compere, will you not pour a little oil from my son's lamp into mine—I want to live a few years yet, that I may earn money and leave it to him?' In the first respect Charos refused to assist him, on the ground that it was out of his power; but in the second matter he promised to advise him. He bade him whenever any one was reported very ill, to set off at once, and when he saw that Charos, who would be visible only to himself, was sitting at the sick man's head, then he might be certain that the sick man was going to die; if, on the other hand, Charos were sitting at his feet, he was destined to recover; in this case he was to undertake to cure him, and thus he would be able to earn a great deal of money in the short time which was left him to live; and so it fell out."[4]

Some vague ideas of heaven and hell are necessarily entertained by a people professing Christianity, and these find expression, the former in the word Paradise, and the latter as *Κόλασις*, or punishment; while the nature of such punishment is suggested by the synonyms of *Πίσσα*, the "sea of pitch," or "the river of fire"; or again, the familiar Tartara, the place of darkness. Paradise, like the garden of Eden, is figured as a region abounding

[4] Kamporoglou, *Ἱστορία τῶν Ἀθηναίων*, vol. i. p. 330,

in all that is so often lacking in the wild mountain land, in shady trees and broad perennial rivers. But quite a different and a more purely pagan conception of the after-life is revealed in the popular poetry—the truest indication of the unassisted popular imagination. In many a village where the priest is a tiller of the soil, as ignorant as the other villagers, where his duties do not extend beyond baptisms, burials, and the formal repetition of a ritual he sometimes cannot read, much less interpret, the people are quite dependent for their notions of another world on these songs and the unconscious tradition of antiquity. For them it has remained the ancient Hades, a common meeting-place of all whose lives are ended, without distinction of merit. Death is deprivation of the joys of life, which, with all its troubles and cares, is sweet. The old uneasy feeling that after death it is not well is ever present; and the dying man laments that he must see the sun no more, nor the light of the moon, the mountains, the shade of plane-trees, and the cool fountain, because in Hades there breaks no dawn, and sings no bird, and no fountains of water flow. Body and soul are still strangely identified, and the dying Klepht requires his sons to make a window to his grave, that he may hear the nightingale, and know when spring comes back. The dead are always praying Charos to let them return and see the sun, and commune with their children; but he is ever inexorable, "When the sea becomes a garden, and the raven grows white like the dove, then will ye get back to earth again." Instances are not wanting in the folk-literature of attempts to escape from this dark and dreary region; one well-known song records how

*Greek Islander.*

three braves determined to break away, when a young mother, newly dead, appealed to them to take her up with them, because her child is crying for the breast. "We cannot do that, fair one," they reply;

"Because of the rustling of thy dress and the shining of thy hair,
The clank of thy gold and silver ornaments, Charos would overhear."

"But I'll take off my dress, and I will plait my hair,
And tie the gold and silver trinkets in my kerchief."

But Charos he is cunning, sharp as a prince of Klephts,
He knows all treacheries of Klephts, a wronger of women;
And Charos in his craft met them in the narrow way,
He clutched the girl by the hair, the young men by the waist.

"Let go my hair, O Charos, and only hold my hand;
And if thou wilt give my child his milk, I'll not try to fly again!"[5]

In the stories and fables current among the people there is not unfrequent mention of the expeditions of mortals to a strange subterraneous world; but it is rather the kingdom of goblins and the realms of magic that are here alluded to; and these tales are all included by Hahn, the principal authority on Greek and Albanian folk-stories among those of Slavonic or Germanic origin. In the popular poetry I have only come upon one instance which records the feat of the hero Zachos, who rode down on a horse with a golden saddle to visit his friends in Hades; Charos wrestles with him for his life, and is three times thrown to the ground, but at last clutches him by the hair and overcomes him, so that for Zachos also there is no returning.[6]

The superstitions regarding the dead are sometimes mutually contradictory, for while in the songs sung by the Mainotes and others at the grave, messages are sent

[5, 6] Passow, Carm. Pop.

Library
Arizona State Museum

by the dead they are lamenting to those who have gone before, and while, again, the dead are represented as questioning the latest comer about those in the world above, it is maintained in other parts that the dead do not recognize one another. And similarly, against the often reiterated sentence of the popular poets, that from Hades there is no return, we may set the prevailing superstition of the Saturday of Souls, the Saturday preceding Whitsunday, when from midnight until day-break the dead are permitted to revisit earth ; and again the period between Easter and Whitmonday, when the same privilege is conceded to them. The haunting of individuals by those whom when living they have wronged, or who endeavour to exercise some particular influence over them, and the manner of laying these ghosts, will be dealt with in a later chapter. Enough has perhaps been said to indicate the close analogy between the modern feeling towards death and the after-life, and the dreary conception of the ancient world ; and in conclusion it may be mentioned that just as in former times certain caverns and gorges were reputed to be the entrances of hell, so still to-day there are caves, and notably that Taenarian grotto near Cape Matapan described by Pausanias, which are alluded to in the people's language as the Gate of Death.

All who have travelled in the East are familiar with the picturesque but at first somewhat startling aspect of the Greek funeral procession. First walks a bearer with the coffin-lid carried erect, covered with black velvet or white silk, with decoration of purple muslin, flowers, and tinsel ; boys carrying the cross and banners of the Church follow ; behind these are the priests in their

bright robes, and one or two professional mourners in plain clothes, who sing a sort of low wailing lamentation as they pass along; while in front of the friends and relatives, the coffin, open, with the corpse exposed, propped up on a pillow, and dressed as for a festival, is carried by four or six bearers. Various explanations have been offered for this curious custom, to which a stranger finds it difficult at first to become reconciled. Until a year ago, high dignitaries of the Church, such as the Metropolitan, were carried to the grave sitting erect on the episcopal chair, and dressed in the full canonicals of their office. This would seem to indicate the high antiquity of the custom of carrying the dead uncovered; and without insisting too much upon a necessary connection, it is interesting to recall to mind the existence of a law of Solon, which, in order to guard against foul play and make the whole Athenian public the witnesses of death, enacted that corpses should be carried out to burial exposed as far as the chest. At the grave the clothes in which the corpse is dressed are, in the case of the wealthy, cut up, so that they may not afford a temptation to sacrilegious theft, and, in the case of the poorer people, often removed and brought home. A pillow filled with earth[7] is placed under the head, and the lid of the coffin, which is made of the lightest and most destructible material, being put on, the body is lowered into the grave. When the earth is filled in, the wooden bars on which the coffin was carried by the bearers are stuck upright in the ground, and a candle is left burning,

[7] In Cyprus the pillow is stuffed with flowers and leaves of the lemon-tree, and there, it appears also, that a dish of flour or grain is interred with the body, a provision for the last journey.—Sakellarios, Κυπριακα.

generally fixed in a hole bored in the bottom of an earthenware pitcher, to shield it from the wind.

Upon the first Saturday in Lent, dedicated to the "Holy Theodores," every one flocks to the cemeteries. In Athens a mass is performed at the principal grave, that of the patriot Michael Totsitzas, and afterwards a discourse in honour of the dead is pronounced by the Professor of Theology at the University. Outside the door of the cemetery chapel the *ikon* of these saints is exposed, the devout file past and kiss it, while a plentiful supply of wax tapers are burnt in their honour. Wreaths are hung on the graves by the relatives of the dead, and the heroes of the revolution are not forgotten. Among the Greeks of Asia Minor a similar celebration, known as the *Saïa*, takes place on the $\frac{5th}{17th}$ of January.

But the more ancient usages connected with the interment of the dead are no longer to be found in the capital, where the tendency to cosmopolitan uniformity has set in; for these we must go farther afield. Tolerably universal still in the provinces and islands is the custom of flinging an earthen pitcher out of the door, so as to break it on the step when the funeral procession leaves the house; and in Corfu, the poor people throw water from the windows when a funeral has passed by—a habit which is, perhaps, a survival of the ancient feeling of the necessity for purification after contact with death. There also it is made an invariable rule to return from the cemetery by some other road than that which the funeral procession has passed along; and, if it is possible, the coffin is carried out of church by a different door to that by which it entered. After a death the house is kept unswept for a term of three days, and it is impera-

tive that the broom which is then used should be burned immediately. This neglect of the house is, perhaps, an outward indication of mourning; another not uncommon one is the habit of allowing the beard to grow. One curious little detail of domestic mourning I came upon in a deme of northern Arcadia, while paying a visit to the Demarch. His daughter, when serving the usual refreshments which Greek hospitality offers to all comers, brought in coffee, but none of the sweetmeats which usually precede it. The Mayor apologizing for this, explained that he had recently lost an aunt, and that it was customary there when in mourning to abstain from these delicacies, adding at the same time that in the case of a foreign guest his daughter should have made an exception. In Maina only, as far as I am aware, is there to be found some trace of the ancient custom of mutilation and disfigurement, the men scratching their faces with their nails, and the women cutting off locks of hair to fling into the grave, like Electra at the tomb of Agamemnon. In northern Greece the women of the family in which a death has occurred dress themselves in white for mourning, and keep the head uncovered, with the hair hanging down; the doors of the house where the body lies are left open, and the villagers flock in and out; while those who have recently lost a relative whisper messages, or lay upon the bed some flower or little token to be conveyed to their friends in the other world.

Allusion has already been made in passing to a survival among the Greeks of Asia Minor of the ancient custom of placing Charon's obol between the lips of the dead;

[8] Soph. El., 448, &c.

and traces of a similar survival are still to be found in Macedonia and Thrace and the islands of the Archipelago, as well as among the Albanians. Indeed, there is considerable evidence that up to recent times the custom was universally prevalent in European Greece, where the coin was not unfrequently accompanied by a key destined to open the gates of Paradise.[9] The Orthodox Church long waged an unsuccessful war against this most tenacious superstition, and repeated canons of holy synods forbade its continuance in vain. Sir Charles Newton, in his Travels in the Levant, records the measures which the Archbishop of Mytilene told him he had taken to put an end to it in Macedonia, by representing that a Turkish coin, inscribed with a quotation from the Koran, was no fit object in a Christian grave. Ingenious methods of evading the prohibition, while fulfilling a superstitious obligation, may still be found among the Orthodox peasants, such as, for instance, the substitution of a little waxen cross for the coin between the lips of the corpse, or, as in the island of Rhodes, of a fragment of tile or pottery, inscribed with the five letters, *IOXON*, known as the Pendalpha, the monogram of the words, *Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς νικᾶ.*

In Rhodes, again, and in the Peloponnese, as well as among the Greeks of the Turkish Empire, on certain dates and anniversaries funeral cakes are made, known as *Kólliva*, which name is also applied to the days on which such cakes are baked and eaten, generally the third, ninth, twentieth, and fortieth days after burial, when masses are also said for the departed. The ingredients of these cakes are boiled grain, sugar, almonds, sesame,

[9] Schmidt, "Volksleben," pp. 238, 239.

parsley, and pomegranate seeds. When baked, they are taken to the priest to bless; part is given away, part consumed, and part broken up over the grave. There is doubtless a symbolical significance in each of the elements of which the *Kólliva* are composed; and the pomegranate seeds immediately recall the story of Persephone.

Greeks and Orthodox Albanians alike dig up the bones after they have been three years underground. These are washed in wine, and then deposited in an ossuary; and the superstition not uncommonly prevails that it is possible to determine the fate of the deceased by the colour of the bones. At any rate, if they are bleached and white, it is a sure sign that the soul is in heaven. For the peace of mind of the relatives, it is to be hoped that the converse does not necessarily hold good; but a form of denunciation very common in the country, "May earth not consume your body!" would seem to indicate that it is held a very evil omen if decomposition does not at once ensue, and may indicate that the departed is haunting the earth as a vampire.[1]

Among the Albanians, with their nomad and migratory life, a very large proportion of the male population die abroad. The bones of these wanderers are afterwards collected and sent home, or, at any rate, a portion of them—a skull or a single bone is brought back to their native place. In illustration of the probable great antiquity of this custom, it is worthy of notice that MM. Pottier and Reinach, in their work on the Necropolis of Myrina, draw attention to the fact that in the course of their excavations they came upon a

[1] See chap. vii., pp. 192, &c.

number of skeletons in which the skull was absent, while in certain cases both the skull and the feet were missing. In the early days of Rome, when the practice of burning the dead came in, some portion of the body, the *os resectum*, was reserved for burial, in order to humour the old conservative tradition which clung to the sentiment that the dead man should be genuinely *inhumatus*. As, however, this custom of mutilation had an obvious sentimental objection, a law of the twelve tables in 450 B.C., which is quoted by Cicero, put an end to it, sanctioning it only in the case of persons who died abroad or in war, so that a portion of their bodies might be restored to their relatives for burial. At Myrina no traces of ashes were found in connection with the bones which would warrant the supposition of a double process of inhumation and incineration; and as, moreover, it is always a small portion of the whole skeleton which is wanting, the authors have adopted the conclusion that these graves at Myrina are those of strangers, and that the missing bones, like those of the Albanians to-day, had been restored to the countries of their origin.[2]

And finally it remains to speak of the myrologies (*μυρολογίαι*) or dirges for the dead, of which so much has been written. The traveller in Greece, especially in the remoter parts of the country, who passes a village burying-ground will often come upon groups or pairs of women sitting or kneeling by a grave, from whose lips proceeds a strange sort of wail of lamentation. If he pauses to listen, he will generally find that it consists of a rhythmic song taken up in a broken voice by each woman in turn. The burden of the song assumes the form of questions to

[2] Pottier et Reinach, "La Nécropole de Myrina," p. 75.

the dead, such as "Why do you leave us?" "Why did you go so soon?" "How do you think the house can get on without you?" From the tone of their voices, he will imagine they are in floods of tears, but their eyes are dry; and when they tire of the crooning song, they will pause, and talk in a matter-of-fact way about every-day things, until suddenly one of them takes up the wail again. These are the relatives of the dead singing myrologies on anniversaries or commemorative days.

In northern Greece the women of the family sing such dirges from the moment of death until the corpse is put in the ground, even in some cases accompanying the funeral processions with their songs of lamentation, and they will sing no other songs for a year. Nor will they ever pass the churchyard without lingering to sing for a few moments by the grave of a dead relative. This form of lamentation is confined to the women; the men content themselves with a word of farewell, and a kiss on the lips of the dead.

The genuine myrology is eminently topical and spontaneous, evoked by strong emotion and therefore improvised, to some air which custom prescribes, and forgotten as soon as sung. Its archetype may be found in the dirges sung over the body of Hector by Andromache, Hecuba, and Helen. The women of the family are often joined by other women of the neighbourhood, who take their part in the dirge, intoning messages for their own dead, which the passing spirit is to deliver. Fauriel records that the myrologies sung in Thessaly and northern Greece are of remarkable beauty, and that the women of those parts seem to possess a peculiar poetic talent; and it would be said

in praise of a certain woman that she was a noted *myrologist*, just as in Italy a man might be pointed out as a talented *improvisatore*. He mentions that he has overheard them practising their muse while at work in the fields, turning such episodes as a broken flower or the death of a bird into symbolisms to sing at a grave.

Of these ephemeral flowers of sorrow and of song it is difficult to give a specimen. Fauriel quotes the substance of such an outburst as it was repeated to him by a Greek who had heard it from the lips of a woman of Metsovo, in Pindus, who had just lost her husband; but this only comes at third hand. The sense of it runs:—

"I saw, a day or two ago, at the door of our house, a young man of lofty stature, with a glance of menace in his eyes, with white wings extending from his shoulders; he stood erect upon the threshold of our house, with a drawn sword in his hand. 'Woman,' he asked me, 'is thy husband in the house?' 'He is there,' I replied; 'he is combing the hair of our child, and caressing him to prevent his crying; but do not enter in, dread youth, for you will frighten the child.' But the youth with the white wings persisted, and would enter in. I tried to thrust him out again, but I had not the strength. He rushed into the house; he rushed upon you, oh, my well-beloved, and struck you with the sword. He struck you, ill-fated one; and see, see here, your son he tried to kill him too!" And with these words she flung herself upon her husband's body.

But besides this form of improvised dirge, there are a number of songs known by heart to the women in other districts, which it is customary for them to come and sing over the dead. As I was riding through Maina, I

came one day upon a group of some seventy women sitting round the door of a tower where, two days before, an old woman had died. They were chanting, to a weird monotonous air, a series of songs peculiar to these occasions, sung on the three days following a death, most of them tinged with the savage character which marks this wild and primitive race. I wrote down one or two from their dictation. One of the shorter ones ran:—

> "Wife of Ligorou, Paraské,
> When you come down to the world below,
> If you chance upon men of ours,
> Tell them the fort is taken.
> It was Babouloyanni took it,
> And the deacon Dikaiakas,
> With Katsibarda's bastard,
> And the children of Stelía."

The character of these songs varies with the district, and every woman will know a considerable number by heart. There are special songs for the death of a husband, a father, a son, or a daughter, and the custom is still tolerably universal in Greece proper, in Macedonia, Asia Minor, and the islands. They are generally thoroughly pagan in inspiration, and it is from these songs of death handed down through long tradition that the popular ideas regarding the after-life are for the most part drawn.[3]

[3] See chap. xi., pp. 281-6, for specimens of such myrologies.

# CHAPTER V.

## BELIEFS AND CEREMONIES.

## SURVIVALS OF THE ANCIENT IN THE NEW.

ALLUSION has already been made to the assimilation and adaptation by the Church of certain primitive pagan ideas, and there exists in new Greece very ample material for remunerative investigation into this special field of inquiry. It must suffice here to draw attention to a few of the most obvious reminiscences of ancient superstition in the modern worship, and in that still more binding "religion," in the old sense of the word, by which the daily life of the people is hemmed in.

In the first place, we are met by the survival in the popular language of a number of attributes of the Deity, connecting him with natural forces, and especially with the control of the weather. The Zeus whose dominion was the upper air, whose weapon was the thunderbolt, and who with his "red right hand" struck the lofty summits of the world, or sent "the snows and hailstorms dire," has passed on his power over the elements to the God of the Christians," so that *Βρέχει ὁ Θέος* (*God is raining*) is a common saying still to-day.[1] In the popular poetry we find the lightning alluded to as the "fire of God,"[2] and, again, it is said that "He compels

[1] The name of Zeus survives in Crete in a name Ζούλακκον (*The Valley of Zeus*) on Mount Ida, and in a common form of invocation Ἠκοῦτέ μου Ζῶνε Θεέ! (*Divine Zeus, hear my prayer*).

[2] Passow, Carm. Pop. Dist., 287.

the clouds, He thunders and He rains."[3] The peasants of Arachova describe an icicle as the "staff of God;" and stranger still, when some stout tree is struck by lightning, they have been heard to say, "the stroke consumed a demon," as though some dim echo of the mythus of the Gigantomachia were still lingering here.[4] The very name of the thunderbolt, *ἀστροπελέκι* (*the starry axe*), would seem to suggest the idea of a weapon in the hand of the Supreme, while there is surely a reminiscence of the earth-shaking Poseidon suggested in the phrase which in the island of Zante, so subject to earthquakes, such phenomena are wont to evoke, "God is shaking His hair."

Of sun, moon, or star worship I have come upon few survivals, but it has been suggested that there is perhaps a trace of classic fancy in a myth current among the seafaring folk of the Ægean, who tell that Orion is the wooer of the Pleiades, and that these are six sisters who have murdered the seventh; behind which imagery there lies the fact that the constellation consists of seven stars, of which only six are visible to the eye.[5]

In Thessaly, Macedonia, and elsewhere, there exists a pretty custom in seasons of drought when the water of the village spring is dry. The children come together, and one of them is selected, generally speaking an orphan, since the prayers of orphans are always accepted, to play the part of Perperoûna or Perperiá. This child is stripped of its clothes, dressed in a garment of leaves, and crowned with flowers; the others form into pro-

[3] Ib., Dist., 242.

[4] Schmidt, "Volksleben."

[5] Wachsmuth, "Das alte Griechenland im neuen."

cession, and, with the Perperoûna at their head, they go from door to door of the village singing a song which varies slightly in different districts, but of which the burden is generally the same. At every door a few drops of water are sprinkled on the head of the child. The song runs as follows:—

> "Perperoûna goes her round,
> Makes a prayer to God.
> Let it rain a shower, Lord,
> A shower of gentle rain!
> Let them sprout and let them flower,
> Give the world their increase,
> Growing corn and cotton plant
> Every herb that is athirst!
> Give us, give us water,
> Corn in heaped abundance,
> Let each ear fill a bushel,
> And every vine a cask."[6]

The origin and nationality of this particular form of intercession for rain I have not been able to trace, nor is it easy to connect with any observance of antiquity another singular piece of weather-lore which may be found in the neighbourhood of Trœzen, in the Peloponnese, a district very subject to severe hailstorms. Here, when the peasants see the dark clouds gathering, they take a black-handled knife—and it is only a black-handled one that will serve—with which they make passes in the air in order, as they say, to "cut the storm." With this we may associate the not uncommon usage of sailors in these waters, of fixing a knife upon the mast, presumably with the same object of cutting, and thus diminishing the strength of, the wind.

There is no lack of weather-superstitions for all the different seasons. A popular proverb runs, "If you

[6] Marcellus, "Chansons Populaires."

have a daughter dear to you, do not let the March wind see her." And accordingly in March, when the sun in these latitudes first finds its strength, it is usual to tie round children's wrists or fingers a twisted thread of red and gold, or blue and gold, which is supposed to prevent the sun from tanning the skin. The colour of the thread appears to be a matter of indifference, but there must be gold in it, which, perhaps, represents the survival of the propitiatory offering. Similarly in the first weeks of August the rays of the sun are held to be very pernicious, and during those days the people take no sea baths, and hang no clothes out to dry. These sun-rays are sometimes personified under the figure of old women, known by the name of "Drymes," who will make sore places in the skin of those exposed to them, and will most certainly pierce holes in any linen put out to bleach. Such a survival of the ancient Pantheism, the attribution of a personal character to natural forces, is by no means uncommon still. The plague, for instance, at the time of its appearance in Greece, was sometimes typified as assuming the shape of a blind woman rushing madly on her way; or, again, was represented as a trio of weird sisters, armed respectively with a broom which sweeps all before it, with a roll bearing the register of the doomed, and a pair of sheers with which to cut the thread of life, like the dire sisters of antiquity; while the same personifying tendency, coupled with the old euphemistic dread of offending destructive omnipotence, is indicated by the word which is still used for the small-pox, namely *Εὐλογία*, or, "she that must be named with respect."

Two domestic festivals associated with particular

seasons are tolerably universal in Greece, the one on the first day of the year, the day of St. Basilios, and the other on the first of March, which, allowing for the difference of climate, corresponds with the first of May in northern Europe. The latter is directly inherited from ancient times, and there is good reason to assume that the former has a similar origin.

The custom of the first of March is in reality a celebration of the return of spring: bands of boys carry round a rudely carved figure of a bird fixed on a wooden cylinder, and sing a song announcing the arrival of the swallow, and all that she brings, begging a little gift in acknowledgment of their good news. Such a custom, we know, prevailed of old in the island of Rhodes, and it is in its nature not likely to have been peculiar to one locality. The song of the Rhodian boys preserved in Athenæus began :—

> Ἦλθ' ἦλθε χελιδὼν, καλὰς ὥρας
> Ἄγουσα καὶ καλοὺς ἐνιαυτοὺς
> Ἐπὶ γαστέρα λευκὰ, κἀπὶ νῶτα μέλαινα.[7]

and the version sung by the companies of boys to-day is only an echo of this :—

> Ἤρθεν, ἦρθε χελιδόνα,
> Ἤρθε κι ἄλλη μελιηδόνα,
> Κάθησε καὶ λάλησε
> Καὶ γλυκὰ κελάδησε.

And very similar is the appeal to the householder for a little gift, with which the two renderings close. There exists also in the compilation of Athenæus a song of similar import, the song of the crow (Koronisma), which

[7] Athenæus, "Deipnon," viii. 360. Variations of the modern Chelidonisma, or Swallow Song, will be found in the chapter dealing with lyrical poetry.

appears to have been sung under similar circumstances; and in the life of Homer, attributed to Herodotus, mention is made of a collection made by boys singing a song called "Eresione" at the festival of Apollo in Samos.

On New Year's day visits are made and presents exchanged, and, as on the first of March, bands of boys go from house to house, singing the song of St. Basil, with others in honour of the master of the house and the family, wishing them success in the coming year. In the towns these boys receive in return small donations of money; in the country, presents of eggs, bread, and cheese. On the analogy of the swallow-custom, it is perhaps justifiable to assume at once the sanction of antiquity for this usage also; but there is another point in connection with it which tends to confirm the assumption. In Athens, and, as far as I have been able to ascertain, in Athens only, the boys carry round on this occasion a rude model of a ship, and the first obvious explanation assigned to this model is that it refers to the opening line of the song, which begins—

"St. Basil is come from Cæsarea,"

since he could not well have come without a ship. But it may be that, just as a number of other customs sanctioned by the Church are only survivals of far older institutions, upon which a new form has been imposed, so this ship also may date back even to the ancient worship of Theseus, instituted and developed by Pisistratus, in which the ship of the famous Cretan journey played so important a part. A trireme figured in the Panathenaic ceremonies, and Dr. Waldstein has pointed out that this was probably due to a blending of the Athena and the Theseus worships, so

that at last the Peplon of Athena became the sail of the ship of Theseus. The very name of *Basil* suggests an adaptation of the mythical *King*, turned to account in the Christian conversion of popular usages, of which many similar instances will be cited in their proper place. Taking these facts into consideration, I am inclined to think that the custom of St. Basil's day is probably no less ancient than we know that of the first of March to be, and that it may present an extremely curious form of survival. On the other hand, it may be maintained that a ship is a very natural symbol to select in a land where a large number of the people follow seafaring pursuits, and that there is no necessity for seeking a more elaborate explanation.

This may, perhaps, be the most appropriate place in which to say a word about a festival once regularly observed in mediæval and modern Athens under the name of *Rousalia*, which is now, however, practically extinct, but which was undoubtedly the survival of some Paneguris, the origin and occasion of which is lost in obscurity. This festival was held in the open space round the Theseion on Easter Tuesday, and not upon the day of St. George, to whom this temple was dedicated when consecrated as a church. It was apparently an occasion upon which the countryfolk flocked into the town; for up to recent times the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages, now occupied exclusively by Albanians, who inherited from their predecessors a custom which they could not explain, came into the town on that day with drums and musical instruments. Before starting, a song was sung, of which the import is also lost, beginning—

Καλημέρα σου, κυρά μου
Καὶ καλῶς τα τὰ παιδιά μου.

" Good-day to you, my lady ;
And well be with you, my children ;"

while the male children were lifted three times into the air, with prayers that they might grow up brave and strong, and then the villagers marched into town to the sound of rude music, to remain making merry all day long in the space round the Theseion.[8]

Politis, on the other hand, thinks there is evidence for asserting that the Rousalia was in the beginning a ceremonious observance in honour of the dead, and maintains that in the interior and south-west of the Peloponnese the name is occasionally found applied to the Saturday of Souls; while there existed also in Roman Thrace a festival similarly called, held in commemoration of the dead.[9] The Athenians of old held their *Nekusia* or *Thanatousia* in the month *Anthesterion* (= February and part of March), therefore somewhere about the average date of the Rousalia at Athens. In this connection the vicinity of the Theseion to the old burial-ground is also suggestive. In the month of *Anthesterion* were also celebrated the Dionysiac *Anthesteria*, a name which means etymologically the Feast of Flowers, just as *Rousalia* or *Rosalia* means the Feast of the Roses; and the chronicler Balsamon, in the 12th century, speaks of the *κακὴ συνήθεια*, the "depraved custom" of this Rosalia as though something of a Bacchic character still attached to it.[1] In Greek Sicily and southern Italy also it is not impossible that the former

[8] Kamporoglou, Hist. Ath.

[9] Journal, Ἀνατολικὴ Ἐπιθεώρισις, Jan. 15th, 1873.

[1] Balsamon, "Ad Concil." vi. 62.

prevalence of some such festival similarly named may account for the popularity of the Festival of St. Rosalia; but in the absence of any direct testimony this must remain in mere hypothesis. As regards the modern Greek Paneguris, its origin cannot now be definitely accounted for; but there seems to be some ground for supposing that its name is virtually a modification of the *Anthesteria*, and that it partook somewhat of the character of that festivity, while it retained perhaps here and there a trace of the ancient Thanatousia, an aspect which the Church, if indeed it in any way recognized the Rousalia, would, no doubt, have endeavoured to substitute for the other less commendable form of celebration.

The numerous churches and chapels scattered over the country in Greece, and frequently in spots far removed from human habitation, are again and again found to have been built upon the foundations as well as with the materials of early pagan temples; consequently it is not surprising to find that the saint to whom they are dedicated has, as it were, by compromise in the old struggle between Paganism and Christianity, often inherited the miraculous power attributed to the deity whom he has superseded; while the localization of the worship of certain saints is strongly marked, just as in former times particular places claimed the exclusive patronage of a particular god. The ubiquity of little shrines, of rustic statues or altars, of sacred enclosures in the ancient world may partially account for the very large number of churches, mostly half ruined, but none the less revered, which dot the country side, when we realize that they would be deliberately set up in many cases in order that the worship

of their saint might replace some Artemis of the cross-ways, some Priapus of the garden, or Cypris of the sea-shore.

It is sometimes the name, sometimes the attributes of the ancient deity, and occasionally both, which the modern saint has inherited. Thus a Church dedicated to the Panaghía Blastiké (the Virgin of Fecundity) has been shown to occupy the site of a temple of Eilythuia, the deity who presided over childbirth, represented also not unfrequently now by St. Marina. In Crete, on the other hand, a saint of the name of Eleutherios (the Liberator) is appealed to on such occasions, and some have endeavoured to trace in the name a corruption of Eilythuia, a theory which becomes less improbable when we take note of the fact that the *u* is pronounced like *f* before *th*. There is also reason for supposing that the little church which stands by the side of the Metropolitan church at Athens, and which is dedicated to the same St. Eleutherios, occupies the site of a shrine of Eilythuia; it is much visited by those who would in ancient times have deposited their *ex voto* at the altar of the pagan divinity.

Similarly, a chapel of St. Cosmo and St. Damiano, patrons of medicine, who are known by the joint title of the *ἅγιοι ἀνάργυροι* (the saints who take no fee), is found to have replaced a temple of Æsculapius; and the twelve Apostles have succeeded to the altar of the "Twelve Gods." Churches dedicated to St. Demetrius occupy the foundations of several shrines of Demeter, and a portion of her attributes as the protector of husbandry, and thence of cattle, have been passed on to the saint, to whom the month of October, when the

sowing takes place, is sacred under the name of "Demetrite." An inscription indicating a *Temenos* of Æthena is built into a chapel of St. Athanasius in Ægina. St. George, whose name etymologically signifies the *husbandman*, has also a share in the protection of agriculture. St. Nicholas has taken over the functions of the god of the sea, and is the object of the prayers of those in danger of shipwreck. He is appealed to under the name of *Ναύτης* or *Θαλασσίτης*, and at Athens one of the churches dedicated to him occupies the site of a Hieron of Poseidon.

The legend of the expulsion of snakes from the island of Crete by Herakles is now carried over to the credit of the Apostle St. Paul, who in other parts, again, is said only to have made them innocuous. Shrines of the "Holy Virgins" are found near fountains once dedicated to nymph and naiad, and the numberless virgins of the cave and saints of the fountain have doubtless similarly replaced the ancient protectors of the spot in the land when every grotto and grove and glen had of old its tutelary genius.

In the island of Naxos, once devoted to the worship of Dionysus, popular tradition ascribes to St. Dionysius the introduction of the grape; while in the neighbouring isle of Paros, St. George is worshipped under the title of the "drunkard" (*μεθυστής*), because his festival there on the $\frac{3}{15}$ November is the signal for broaching the new wine. The story of the introduction of the grape to Naxos is told as follows :—

When Dionysius was still young, he made a journey through Greece in order to cross to Naxos. Being tired upon his way, he sat

down upon a stone to rest. As he sat there, he perceived a very small plant growing in the ground before him, which appeared to him so beautiful that he determined to take it with him, to plant there. But fearing lest the heat of the sun should wither it before he got to Naxos, he placed it in the thigh-bone of a bird, the better to carry. As he went on, however, the plant grew so rapidly in the hand of the saint that the shoots came out at either end of the bone. Fearing anew that it would wither in the sun, he cast about what he should do, and finding the thigh-bone of a lion he inserted into this the plant with the other bone. But still it grew and filled the lion's bone. Then he lit on the bone of an ass, and into this he slipped the two other bones with the plant, and so brought it safely to Naxos. But when he came to plant it the roots were so firmly fixed in the bones that he was forced to plant bone and root together. The plant grew and prospered and bore magnificent grapes, and from these they made the first wine, and the saint gave it men to drink. And then the wonder of it was that when they had drunk a little they sang like birds, when they drank more they grew strong as lions, but then if they drank yet more they became like asses.[3]

One is once more reminded of Silenus and the Bacchic rout of jollity in the curious mediæval cult at Naxos of St. Pachys (St. Fat), a saint whose intervention was held to confer the desirable gift of obesity, a quality which must have been much esteemed in the early middle ages, seeing what work Duke Sanudo had to put this worship down.

The French traveller Lenormant gives in his account of the Sacred Way[4] a story which recalls the myth of Demeter and Kore, told him by a centenarian priest at Eleusis, and which is so interesting that I cannot refrain from quoting its outlines in this connection, at the same

[3] Hahn's "Neugriechische Märchen." The story was picked up by Christian Siegel in a Bœotian village in 1846.

[4] François Lenormant, "La Voie Sacrée," chap. vi. note.

time remarking that such tales of the seizure of maidens by magicians or by Turkish Agas are not uncommon in this country, and that the story would not necessarily suggest the rape of Persephone if it were not for the name of Demetria, who is described as a saint, though no such saint occurs in Greek hagiology; and for the localization of the scene at Eleusis, where the majority of the people are, as a matter of fact, Albanians. The story is rather Germanic or Slavonic in character than Hellenic. Many such tales of dragons and sorcerers have found their way into Greek folk-lore, and it is just possible that the tale is a hybrid one, the magician's dress being fitted on to some tradition lingering here of the Demeter myth, and the magician becoming a Turkish Aga at an obviously later date. The story, which I quote with all reserve, runs as follows:—

St. Demetria was an ancient dame of Athens, renowned for her goodness and charity, who had a daughter of incomparable beauty. A Turkish Aga, who was also a magician, fell madly in love with this daughter, but she rejected his addresses. Thereupon he came one night when her mother was in church and carried her off to Epirus, where he lived. When the mother came back from church, and found her daughter gone, she went with much tribulation questioning every one for tidings; but none could give her any. She asked the tree before the house, but the tree made no answer; she asked the sun, the moon, and the stars, but these answered not. Only the old stork on the roof, who had long been her pensioner, answered saying, "A Turk who rode upon a black horse has carried off thy daughter to the parts where the sun goes down; I will go with thee, and try to find her." After long wanderings, the ancient dame came to Eleusis; there she fell sick, and her companion could do nothing to assist her. But the wife of the Khodja Bachi Nikóla found her, and cared for her, and his son, a youth of great strength and comely withal, learned her story

and undertook to help her, asking only for her daughter's hand as his reward. So he went his way accompanied by the stork, and after many wanderings they came to a forest, where they found forty dragons sitting round an immense cauldron of boiling water. The youth lifted the cauldron with one hand, and stirred the fire with the other, and then replaced the cauldron. The dragons were astonished at his being able to lift with one hand what it had taken forty of them to move, and asked him, being so strong, to rescue for them from a fortress a damsel who had been taken by an Aga. They conducted him to a tower, which he climbed by driving nails into the wall, so as to get in by a small doorway. He then dared the dragons to follow him, and slew them one by one as they came in. But he had hardly got rid of these dangerous guides when the Aga returned, and a terrible combat ensued, which lasted three days with varying fortunes, till, on the third day, the magician, who had the power of assuming various forms, such as that of a lion, a serpent, or a flame, got the better of the youth and cut him into pieces. During the night, however, the faithful stork brought a magic herb, by means of which he was restored whole. He then appealed to the Panaghía for assistance, vowing that if he prevailed he would become a monk, and so the combat began again. The stork came to his assistance, and pecked at the Aga's eyes as well as at a white hair which grew in the midst of his black locks, and in which lay the secret of his strength. So the youth conquered, restored the damsel to her mother Demetria, and himself withdrew into the monastery of the Phaneroméne (the Virgin of the Annunciation) in the island of Salamis.

The same writer mentions a tradition found in Epirus, near the country assigned to the mythical king Aidoneus, of the carrying off by the Tchiflick Bachi of a young Demetrius, who being put to death was afterwards venerated as a saint, and traces of the survival of the myth are perhaps also to be found in the folk-tales collected by Hahn. In one case it is a demon who assumes the form of thunder and lightning, and carries off a king's daughter to a desert place, where, striking the

ground with his hand, he opens a chasm in the earth and bears her down to a subterraneous palace. In another we have a hero descending through a chasm into the bowels of the earth to bring back the purest woman in the world kept a prisoner there, who, on arriving at the palace of the king of the underworld, finds it guarded by a three-headed dog.

Perhaps enough has been said to suggest what a large field still remains open for investigation in this direction, in examining into the re-occupation of ancient sites, and following up analogies of name and worship in popular lore and religion to-day. One must beware, however, of pressing these analogies too far. It would seem to be a little fantastic to seek to establish a corruption of *'Αϊδωνεὺς*, as certain travellers have done, in the name *'Αϊδονάτος*, which is the popular form of *"Αγιος Δονάτος*, (St. Donato), a saint well known on both sides of the Adriatic, a bishop, and no legendary one, of Zara. Again, the common identification of St. Elias, whose shrines occupy the summits of rocks and mountains, with the worship of the sun-god Helios, perhaps assumes too much. For in ancient Greece a very limited number of mountain summits were dedicated to the sun-god, whereas in the modern landscape there is scarcely ever out of range of the eye some little white chapel crowning a prominent crest of rock, dedicated to the prophet whose assumption would naturally suggest the high places as the most appropriate for his altars. It is true that St. Elias now occupies the highest peak in Taygetus, and that on this summit, the Taletum of antiquity, horses were sacrificed to the sun. But, on the other hand, he has taken the place of Zeus Panhellenios in Ægina, of

the Muses on Helikon, of Menelaus at the Menelaon of Sparta. Of course, when the saint was once established as the patron of a mountain summit, his shrines would naturally multiply in a mountainous land, and it is not impossible that the church on the Taletum may have been one of the first; but it must not by any means be assumed, as some travellers appear to do, that every peak now dedicated to him was once the home of sun-worship.

The exhibition and worship of plastic images or statues of saints is forbidden by the Orthodox Church; but on the other hand a peculiar sanctity is attached to their *ikons*, or pictures, which vie with one another in the popular estimation for miraculous power; and allusion has already been made to the *ikon* of his patron saint, which hangs in the cottage of every peasant, as well as to the lamp which is kept ever burning before it. Many are the offerings in silver or in wax, shaped to represent arms, and legs, and eyes, suspended round the *ikons*, to which a miraculous power of healing is ascribed; images of children stamped out in silver are brought by grateful mothers, and model ships are hung up by those who owe their rescue to the intervention of the saint; while no small part of the revenues of churches and monasteries depends on the offerings of tapers, of oil, of first-fruits, of a portion of the profits of a business transaction which have been vowed to the saint in acknowledgment of a successful speculation. The ancients brought similar *anathemata* to the shrines of the patrons of healing; and numerous specimens of votive tablets, on which the ailing member was carved in marble, have been found on the sites once sacred to Amphiaraus and Æsculapius. Sometimes the

*ikon*, or a part of it, is covered with silver or even with gold by the grateful votary; and a more primitive form of this intention may still be observed, among other places, in the island of Rhodes, where golden coins are sometimes stuck on to the faces of the saints in the *ikons* with a piece of wax. Even for this an analogy can be found in antiquity, for we read in Lucian[5] of a statue of Pelichos, to the thighs of which silver coins were affixed with wax, as were also plates of the same metal, offered by some of his votaries in return for his curing them of their fevers.

That the gods were amenable to gifts was the conviction of the ancient world, and following up the train of ideas suggested by the permanence of this persuasion, one is tempted to inquire whether any survival of the rites of sacrifice may be detected.

One very curious relic of folk-custom undoubtedly has its origin in sacrifice, and its continuance until the present day, even in the capital of modern Greece, is the more curious, inasmuch as it is bound up with a religious observance which is never omitted. After the ground has been cleared for the foundations of a new house, the future owner, his family, and the workmen attend together with the *Pappas* in full canonicals, accompanied by incense, holy water, and all due accessories. A prayer is said, and those present are aspersed, and the site is sprinkled with the consecrated water. Then a fowl or a lamb, which you will have noticed lying near with the feet tied together, is taken by one of the workmen, killed and decapitated, the *Pappas* standing by all the while, and even giving directions; the blood is then

[5] Lucian, "Philopseudes," § 20.

smeared on the foundation stone, in the fulfilment of the popular adage that "there must be blood in the foundations." The sacrifice, however, has no connection with the prayer, and is, it would seem, rather intended to propitate the *στοιχεῖον*, or familiar of the spot, to the belief in which, as well as to the custom here described, we shall return in dealing with the supernatural. The point of interest in the present connection is the apparent sanction which is given to the superstition by the presence of the priest.

Dr. Schmidt [6] is, moreover, of opinion that a suggestion of the ancient sacred offering is to be found in those cakes which are prepared on different festivals in Greece under the names of Sperma, Stári, Koukkia, and Kolliva, for the name Kolliva is not only applied to the funeral cakes already described, but to others similar in composition which are baked at the time of the annual sowing, at harvest or at vintage time, and which, being in the nature of a propitiatory or thank-offering, are taken to the church, where a portion is crumbled over the altar, while the rest is distributed among those present, who consume it while expressing some wish—for long life, or for abundant harvests in future. More interesting and more suggestive yet in this respect is a ceremony which he was fortunate enough to witness himself one Christmas in the house of a priest, at Zante, a ceremony which is also found in Cephalonia, but which in Zante itself is quite universal in the villages, and still observed in some of the great houses. Throughout the Ionian islands at Christmas a monster *Koullouri*, or ring-shaped cake is prepared, in which a coin is concealed, as

[6] "Volksleben," p. 59, &c.

in the plum-pudding at home. The head of the household on these occasions fills a vessel with equal portions of wine and olive-oil, adding a little incense and four small fragments cut from the cake in different places. Then, accompanied by his family, he proceeds to the the hearth, and, either holding the *Koullouri* himself or giving it to two of his children to hold over the fire, pours the contents of the vessel through the open ring of the cake on to the flames in the form of the cross, at the same time thrice repeating with his family a *gloria* for the birth of Christ. The primitive sacrifice to Hestia, the oldest of worships, has, as he points out, undoubtedly here survived, and is renewed from year to year on the day that is above all others a domestic festival, when all the family are united together under one roof.

It would be beyond the scope of the present chapters, which are concerned rather with the beliefs and superstitions of the people, to enter at length upon the curious and interesting ceremonial of the Greek Church at its religious festivals, but a few words are necessary with regard to the celebration of Easter, which, following upon the long Lenten fast, observed here with great strictness, is essentially a popular feast, with which not a few singular and suggestive usages are connected.

Upon the eve of Good Friday takes place what is called the reading of the twelve Gospels—that is to say, the three concluding chapters from each of the four evangelists—a somewhat exhausting proceeding, which occupies about three hours. The night of Good Friday is devoted to the ceremony of the *Epitaphion*, or funeral procession. In the centre of the church the *ikon* of the

Saviour is disposed on a kind of bier, with candles burning at the corners, and over it is a thin muslin veil on which consecrated flowers are scattered. The devout press round to kiss the *ikon* and obtain one of these flowers. The latter, generally roses or detached rose-leaves, are particularly valued by sailors, who here, as elsewhere, are notoriously superstitious. They endeavour to secure several, which they wrap up in cotton wool and preserve with the greatest care, being firmly persuaded that if they are overtaken by a storm during the ensuing year, they have only to throw two or three of these petals on the waves in order to abate their violence; but it is essential that the leaves should not be quite dry or withered.

Between nine and ten at night the funeral procession is organized, and the *ikon* is carried round the streets as if it were a corpse for burial, with all the funeral insignia, the cross, the banners, and the officiating priests, amid a blaze of lighted tapers. Such a procession is organized from every church, attended by its own congregation. The most remarkable for pomp is, of course, that from the Cathedral at Athens, where the service is conducted by the Metropolitan in person; military bands playing dead marches accompany the bier, which is borne by the officiating priests in their gorgeous robes of golden embroidery. The whole city is in the streets and in the balconies, everywhere there is a blaze of lighted tapers and Bengal lights, so that the whole effect is far more that of a national festival than of an occasion of penitence and mourning.

For some time previously the city will have assumed a picturesque aspect from the number of shepherds who,

with their flocks, have come down from the mountains, and are camped in every available open space, to negotiate the sale of their lambs, for there is no family so poor that they will not break the long fast with an Easter lamb, the value of which is about five francs, and a veritable massacre of the innocents goes on.

It is late on Saturday night that the real Easter celebration takes place. An immense crowd fills up all the approaches to the Cathedral, and such parts of the church as are not kept clear. Without, a raised platform has been erected and decorated with evergreens. In the Cathedral the Royal Princes, the Ministers of State, and the high functionaries of the kingdom assemble to attend the midnight service. As the hour of midnight approaches, the Metropolitan with his assistants, preceded by the cross and banners, advance with lighted tapers. The various notabilities light their tapers from that of the archbishop, and so the sacred fire is communicated to the crowd. As the midnight hour sounds, and Easter succeeds the last day of Lent, the Metropolitan, a blaze of silver and gold, with his tiara, the silver gospel, and the episcopal crozier, ascends the platform outside the church, and proclaims to the assembled people the tidings *Χρίστος ἀνέστη*, "Christ has risen!" In a moment all the bells are ringing far and near; bands of music strike up, guns are discharged, rockets ascend, Bengal fires are lighted, and the sparkle of the tapers spreads from house to house, and from street to street, till the whole city is alive with sound and flame. The clergy return to the church, and the Easter ritual continues, long and tedious. And now the long fast is over, and the people, who for the last

Greek Priests.

two or three days have tasted no food but bread and olives and a little black coffee, and who have many of them on Good Friday observed literally the rule, to suffer no food to pass their lips between sunrise and sunset, are released from their probation, and feasting becomes the order of the night. Fires are kindled, over which early on Easter morning the lambs are roasted whole. The ceremonial is over; only the greeting *Χρίστος ἀνέστη*, and the answer, *Ἀληθῶς ἀνέστη*. "He is risen indeed," is in every mouth. During the afternoon of Easter Sunday there is another service for those who have not been able to attend the previous evening, at which the Gospel is read in every known tongue, in evidence presumably of the catholicity of the only Orthodox faith.

In illustration of the adaptive capacities of the Christian religion at a time when the early Church was with difficulty establishing its supremacy, it has been pointed out how close is the analogy between this festival of the Church and the prevailing ideas which inspired that most solemn celebration of the ancient world, the greater mysteries of Eleusis. The very time of year was probably coincident with the average recurrence of Easter, for it was towards the close of March that they celebrated the return of Persephone, typifying the resurrection of the life of nature. Of old, there was the same mournful nightly ritual—the torch-light procession, the lamentation for the descent of Demeter to the world below. The long fast had also been observed in commemoration of the fast of Demeter during the nine days through which she sought her child. There followed the solemn celebra-

tion on the twelfth night, when the search and probation was concluded, and with it the sudden change from mourning to joy for the return of Persephone, the release from the long fast, and the abandonment to the same feasting and rejoicings.

Similar in character to that in the capital, though less pretentious in surroundings, is the observance of Easter among all the Greek populations. In the Ionian islands when the lamb is slain, it is usual to make a cross with the blood over the door of the house, in accordance, no doubt, with the instructions in the Book of Exodus, for the observation of the Passover: "And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side-posts, and on the upper door-post of the houses." Here also at the moment of the *gloria*, the proclamation of the fact of the resurrection by the priest, the people run to the nearest water and wash their faces; tubs and troughs are even put out in readiness in the street for this purpose. It symbolizes, no doubt, the purification which the long atonement of Lent has brought about. At this moment also a very curious custom may still be occasionally observed in Corfu, though it is said to be fast dying out, namely, the throwing of broken pottery from the windows by the women, accompanied by the utterance of sundry curses and invectives against the Jews. The clatter of the broken earthenware upon the stones has been held by some to have the same figurative meaning as the wooden rattles sprung in other places at this season by the children, the noise of which represents the breaking of the bones of Judas. But it is more probable that the origin of this custom will be found to be a material expression given to the words which are sung in the

ritual on the night of Holy Thursday: "They stripped me of my garments, and put upon me a scarlet cloak, they set upon my head a crown of thorns, and in my right hand they placed a reed, *that I may break them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*"

# CHAPTER VI.

## LUCK, DIVINATION, AND HEALING.

WHILST fate still assumes a personified form in the popular mind, fortune or luck, which plays a very important part in the superstitions of daily life, remains rather an abstract than a concretely personified idea. There is probably no other country in which the every-day conduct of men is governed by a greater horde of little maxims and superstitions: the manner of sitting down to, and rising from meals, the way in which salt should be pounded, the days on which it is permissible to cut the nails,[1] and a host of other similar details, are laid down with the utmost strictness; and among the simpler folk no one would think of borrowing soap in the evening, of speaking profanely with bread in the hand, nor of letting salt, fire, leaven, or an egg go out of the house after sunset—the poultry would inevitably sicken, and the wine most certainly turn sour. These precepts were no doubt many of them based in their origin on some ethical rule of conduct, but it is not always easy to recognize the principle involved in such a custom,

[1] A similar superstition existed in ancient Italy. Pliny recommends the cutting of the nails of the Nones, of the hair on the 7th and 29th day of the moon.—"Nat. Hist." xxviii. 2. Indeed, most of these rules of conduct are probably of extreme antiquity. The custom of saluting those who sneeze, which is commonly referred to the Great Plague, is also spoken of by Pliny, who mentions that the Emperor Tiberius never omitted this formula.

for instance, as that which prescribes that the first sack brought from the mill must be opened by one who has already christened a child.

Two superstitions still very prevalent in the country villages seem to point to a dread of offending the forces of nature by subjecting their gifts to unnatural treatment; according to one, it is held to be very unlucky for harvest prospects to toast bread between the sowing time and the reaping; while the other forbids the cleaning of the oil-jar or the frying-pan with water, they must only be wiped out with a cloth, or the olive crop will assuredly suffer.

It would occupy far too much space to enumerate even a part of the various maxims and precepts dealing with what is lucky or unlucky, and it must suffice to mention a few of the most typical. And in the first place it is held to be peculiarly inauspicious to meet a priest immediately after leaving the house, for, as some would tell you, all priests have the "evil eye." Should such an untoward encounter occur at the outset on a journey, many people would not hesitate to defer the expedition, or, at any rate, would go back to the house and start afresh. This superstitious dread of a man whose supposed relations with a higher power surround him with an uncanny atmosphere, is well known among primitive people, and universal among sailors. At the same time, it may occasionally admit of a perfectly rational explanation, for in Russia, where it is unlucky to meet a priest on Monday, the desire to avoid him was originally quite a natural one, inasmuch as he was formerly empowered to inflict a fine for non-attendance at church on Sunday, and so, generally speaking, the guilty con-

science would shrink from an interview with its spiritual guardian.[2]

A number of indications of good or evil fortune are drawn from animals, and many of these, like the crossing of the path by a hare, are by no means confined to Greece. Besides the more elaborate manner of augury still practised by those who have the special aptitude for such a science, there exists a sort of rhyming popular zoology, dealing with luck-lore or weather-lore, of which the following translations will serve as specimens :—

> "A dog that howls smells death
> Approaching the house of his master."

The Albanians have a similar saying, "When a dog howls with head averted from the house, it signifies a death there.

> "When you hear a hen crowing
> Like a cock in the poultry-yard,
> Having her head towards the east,
> Know that this signifies good luck;
> And when towards the west, the contrary,
> Unless you kill her there and then
> And eat your victim."

The Albanian version runs, "When a hen crows like a cock, it forbodes death or misfortune; but if at the time her head is turned to the east, it has no signification." Albanians also consider that the death of a relation is foreshadowed by meeting a snake before sunrise or at sunset.[3]

At the time of the latest troubles in Crete in 1889, a

[2] Usus valde singularis praevalet apud Graecos, qui a domo proficiscentes, si protinus sacerdoti per strata viarum occursent, quo averteretur omen, manum in genitalia adhibent. Eadem consuetudo viget apud Italos. Confer subter de fascinatione.

[3] Hahn, "Albanesische Studien."

rumour was abroad among the refugees from that island in Greece that a mule had foaled in the spring, an event which was supposed to prognosticate the approach of some portent or calamity, recalling the story which Herodotus thought worthy to mention respecting the mule of Zopyrus, whose foaling was supposed to portend the imminent capture of Babylon.[4]

A graphic touch of superstitious awe represents a rainbow arched over a cemetery as signifying the approach of an epidemic; and not less picturesque is the popular story of the ilex-tree, though I do not know that it is solely confined to Greek legend-lore. It accounts for the evil reputation of the ilex, or winter oak, as a tree of bad omen, because it was from its wood that the cross was made. A miraculous foreknowledge of the Crucifixion had spread among the forest trees, which unanimously agreed not to allow their wood to serve for the purpose of forming the cross, and when the workmen came, they either turned the edge of the axe or bent away from the stroke. Only the ilex consented and passively submitted to be cut down; therefore the wood-cutters of the mountains will not soil their axes with its bark, nor desecrate their hearths by burning it.

The unlucky day, corresponding to Friday with us, is pretty generally throughout Greece the Tuesday, as it is also in Spain, and as it was with the ancient Athenians. But it appears that in Thessaly and Macedonia, Saturday is considered inauspicious for beginning any undertaking, which may perhaps be a reminiscence of the Jewish Sabbath.

No belief is more universal throughout the country

[4] Herodotus, iii. 153.

than that of the malign power of the "evil eye." It is found in every grade of society, and even acknowledged by the Church, which has prayers against its potency. Like the *βασκανία* of the ancient Greeks, corrupted into *fascinum* or *fascinatio* in Latin, the mysterious influence which the expression implies is not merely confined to certain individuals, who consciously and even unconsciously perpetually cast the baleful shadow by a look, by the voice, or by the touch; but it may also accidentally proceed from the innocent, who often unwittingly convey by praise or flattery misfortune to what they too indiscriminately admire. This deleterious influence of approval which is supposed to surround its object with a fatal "fascination" is closely connected in some sort with the old idea of Nemesis, a retribution for pride in what excites the envy of others; and, indeed, it appears that in ancient Rome a statue of Nemesis on the Capitol was invoked to ward off the evil eye from her votaries.[5] A stain is thus frequently made on the white linen of a new dress, lest the wearer by too great pride in the bravery of her embroideries should incur the danger of retribution, or lest an envious eye should cast a withering glance upon it; or, again, queer little signs and symbols having the same exorcising power are worked into the border. Children are especially susceptible to the pernicious effect of the "evil eye," and no allusion must on any account be made to the beauty or vigour of a very young child. Even animals are not exempt, and more especially the young, much as it was in Virgil's Day;

"Nescio quis teneros oculus mihi fascinat agnos."[6]

[5] Pliny, "Nat. Hist.," xxxviii. 2.
[6] Virg., Ecl., iii. 103.

The most universal antidote against "fascination" is garlic, and a mother or nurse walking out with her children will frequently take a clove in her pocket. So to undo the evil omen of some inauspicious observation, the exclamation σκόρδον (garlic) is used with much the same force as the German *Unberufen*, and in the island of Rhodes appeal is made to the "garlic of Kalavarda," which has a special efficacy in deprecation. With children, again, a black smudge from the cauldron or frying-pan applied behind the ear is considered as a safeguard, and nurses are frequently found using this preventive even after being sternly forbidden to do so.

The ancients seem to have held that a power which grew out of envy was best thwarted by anything which provoked laughter. Amulets of an indelicate character were therefore very much worn as charms against the "evil eye,"[7] and spitting was a universal remedy; either as Tibullus[8] represents the process, by spitting into one's own breast, or by repeating this process three times, which Theocritus[9] sings, was the spell taught "by the ancient crone Kotytaris," or by touching with the middle finger fresh from the mouth the lips and forehead of the child that had been "overlooked," as Persius[1] records. Again, Pliny writes, "There is power in the human saliva against poisonings and fascinations;" and such instances might be multiplied. This antidote has survived in Greece to-day, and the traveller Dodwell[2]

[7] A pueris turpicula res in collo quaedam suspenditur.—Varro, "De Ling, Lat.," L. vi.; cp. also Hor., "Epod." viii. 18. See note on p. 158.

[8] Tibullus, "El.," I. ii. 56.

[9] Theocritus, "Idyll," vi. 39.

[1] Persius, ii. 31.

[2] Dodwell, "Tour through Greece," vol. ii. 36.

records a striking experience of its application in Corfu, where he had unwittingly praised the looks of his host's two fine children, and was forthwith entreated, nay, almost compelled by the family to spit in the faces of the children he had praised.

Every variety of amulet for the same purpose may also be found in use ; corals and cornelians, bits of blue glass, and Byzantine sequins are among the most common, and may frequently be seen bound to the heads of mules or horses, and more especially round the necks of colts. Little charms representing rudely the hand with outstretched fore and little finger, and bracelets of blue glass are universally worn ; and in certain districts of Rhodes, the women in full-dress wear upon the forehead a small triangular piece of silver inscribed with the initials of the Pendalpha.[3]

A third manner of guaranteeing the household against this pernicious influence is by fumigation with burning branches of dry olive, which have been blessed during holy week, and it is supposed that the extent of danger averted may be estimated by the number of times that the burning leaves are heard to crackle.

Charms and amulets are also used to guard their wearers against other dangers besides the "evil eye." I remember a Cretan warrior who pretended to be invulnerable in virtue of a medal of St. Constantine which he wore suspended round his neck. Twice he was hit without being wounded in the Cretan war, but a third time he received a serious wound in the neck. This, however, did not shake his confidence, and he attributed his mischance to the fact that, in pursuance of

[3] See p. 126.

a vendetta, he had determined in his mind to take the life of a fellow-Christian, whereupon the saint had withdrawn his protection.

In illustration of the old-world notion alluded to above, that too great pride in material success incurs the the envy of a mysterious power, which must therefore be propitiated in moments of prosperity, the popular Athenian tradition of the Nyphitsa (*Νυφίτσα*) may be appropriately mentioned here. The word is a diminutive formed from *νύφη*, *i.e.* *νύμφη*, a bride, and signifies a weasel. The legend is that the weasel is envious of brides, having been a bride herself, though the reason or manner of her metamorphosis into an animal is not assigned. She exhibits her envy by making havoc among the wedding gifts and provisions. Therefore, in the house where these are collected, sweetmeats and honey are put out to appease her, known as "the necessary spoonfuls," and a song is sung with much ceremony in which the weasel is invited to partake and spare the wedding array.[4]

The ancient belief in sorcery, magic, and witchcraft has by no means passed away, and is said to be especially prevalent in Thessaly, where the wise woman may still be found at work with all the old-world paraphernalia of her trade. The preparation of love-philtres or antidotes for spells and incantations, the reading of the stars, the interpretation of dreams, the telling of fortunes, and the indication of hidden treasure, are still the business of the witch.

But the power of second sight and of foretelling the future does not necessarily involve the uncanny reputa-

[4] Kamporoglou, Hist. Ath.

tion attaching to the wise woman. It is generally an art handed down from father to son, and may not impossibly be in some cases directly inherited from the augurs and omen-readers of antiquity. There are still found those who interpret the significance of the flight of birds, and draw conclusions from the spleen, the liver, or the entrails of animals. The Klephts and Armatoli never failed to examine the shoulder-blade of sheep or lambs which they slaughtered, in order to read in the lines and markings a prediction of the success or failure of their operations, and here and there you will find a shepherd still who knows how to interpret the ciphers on old bones.

The superstitious reverence attached to *ikons* or holy pictures, has been already alluded to, with the gifts suspended round them as propitiatory offerings or tokens of gratitude; but they are occasionally also called upon to reveal the future, and indicate to the votary whether his heart's desire will be accomplished. The manner in which this is tested is by applying a coin to the picture. If the coin adheres, it signifies the affirmation, if it falls, the disappointment of the wish which the applicant has in his mind. This ceremony may be witnessed in several places, but nowhere better than in the church of St. Paraskeví, at Chalcis in Eubœa, during the celebration of the annual Paneguris on July 25th (o.s.). It is largely frequented by those whose soberer reason is temporarily deranged by the passion of love.

In such a country we shall, of course, find no lack of those simples and herbal decoctions for the cure of all the ills that flesh is heir to, of which old women in the country have the monopoly. Many of these are pro-

bably local. In the island of Crete a plant, which is common by the roadside, with whose botanical name I am not familiar, but which is known in the island as *καλοκοιμηθεία* (the giver of good sleep), was pointed out as largely used by the good wives of the villages as a household remedy for indigestion and sleeplessness, and many were the stories told of its wonderful efficacy on patients whose maladies had defied the usual medical remedies. Elsewhere a potato suspended in a bag to the person was recommended as a prophylactic against rheumatism. Pounded onions are common as a dressing for wounds, and garlic is not less frequently taken internally as a medicine than used externally to ward off evil from without. Such remedies are common enough among the simple folk in every country; more interesting are those which connote a moral influence only, and imply a belief in some supernatural agency.

Many illnesses, especially those of a nervous character, are still attributed to demoniac influence, so that recourse is rather had by those afflicted to the priest than to the doctor, in order that the evil spirits by which they are possessed may be authoritatively exorcised. Among such influences are included nightmares, ascribed to direct diabolic intervention, like the Ephialtes of old. To keep the evil spirit away, a black-handled knife is frequently put under the pillow.

There is at Athens, under the observatory hill, a little church dedicated to Sta. Marina, founded no doubt upon the site of some ancient shrine, since all the rocks around are levelled for foundations, or cut for the insertion of inscriptions and votive tablets. To this church mothers bring sick children, and undress them, leaving the

old clothes behind, in confidence that the sickness will be cast off with the abandoned garments. The practice of suspending clothes and locks of hair in churches is common also in southern Italy, and certainly the usage was not unknown in antiquity. Rescued mariners we know hung up the clothes in which they were saved as a thank-offering to the god of the sea, and Pausanias mentions a statue of Hygeia at Sicyon which was so covered with locks of hair as to be almost invisible. These offerings, however, seem rather to have been made in gratitude for cures completed, than to imply anticipation of the departure of disease by the act of severance, which is the notion underlying the curious custom in the church of Sta. Marina. Near this same church is an inclined surface of rock, which has received a high polish through being used as a slide by the women of many generations, who, slipping down it in a sitting posture, have faith in this gymnastic performance as a cure for barrenness.

In Athens, again, there is in the neighbourhood of the old theatre, a little chapel dedicated to St. John the Baptist, built round an antique column, and reaching to about half its present height, for the level of the ground has risen considerably. This column is looked upon as exerting a magical or miraculous power over fevers and other diseases. In August and September, when fever is rife, patients throng to it, and fastening a silken thread to the column with a piece of wax, have the firm conviction that the fever will be drawn out along the thread and into the column. The following is the popular superstition of the Athenians with regard to the column and the chapel :—

"St. John was a physician, and especially skilled in the cure of fevers. He lived the life of an ascetic, and did many good works. When he was aware that his death was approaching, he set up a column, and bound to its foundations all manner of diseases with silken threads of various colours: fevers with a yellow thread, measles with a red one, and other diseases with other colours. That they might go deep, he set the column on top of them, and said, 'When I die, let whosoever is sick come and tie to this column a silken thread with three knots of the colour that his sickness takes, and say, 'Dear St. John, I bind my sickness to the column, and do by thy favour loose it from me,' and then he will be healed.'"[5]

But stranger than any of these wild fancies is a case reported in the Athenian press as having recently occurred in the deme of Arta, in the island of Andros, where a sufferer from hereditary heart disease was said to have instructed his family to disinter the body of a kinsman who had recently died of the same malady, and extract the heart, which was to be burned and given him as ashes in a potion to drink.[6]

It now remains to describe the popular conception of the supernatural in various forms of personification, the prototypes of which are nearly all to be found in antiquity. They have, however, been strangely confused in the tradition of the illiterate, and sensibly modified by the ban of religion, which has included them all among the ministers of, or emanations from, the evil one, in the efforts to mitigate what it was impossible wholly to extirpate.

[5] Kamporoglou, Hist. Ath.

[6] This singular story was reported in the journal, the *Ephemeris*, of January 16th, 1890. I was unable to obtain either a definite confirmation or contradiction of the facts, though I took some pains to do so. But the fact of a foreigner investigating such a matter would naturally produce reticence.—R. R.

# CHAPTER VII.

## THE SUPERNATURAL.

### GENII, NEREIDS, VAMPIRES, GOBLINS, AND DEMONS.

THE custom of sacrificing a fowl or a lamb on the site of a new house, and of sprinkling the foundations with its blood, has been alluded to in a previous chapter. The word employed for this proceeding is στοιχειώνω, a verb used transitively, which seems to imply that it is an offering or sacrifice to the στοιχεῖον, which signifies literally *element*, and may here be interpreted *genius of the spot*. This interpretation throws light on a passage in the Epistle to the Galatians where the word στοιχεῖα is rendered by "elements" in our version :—"the weak and beggarly elements whereunto ye desire to be again in bondage"—which means in reality the "wretched genii of your superstition." The sacrifice is, however, it would appear, not always carried out in its material form with a fowl or lamb, and a suggestion may be found in the popular beliefs that such ceremonies were at one time attended with the grim rites of human sacrifice. Dr. Schmidt observed in Zante and Cephalonia that etiquette prescribed that the future owner of the house should first be led away by the master-builder, so as not to be present at this part of the proceedings. The belief still prevails that the attempt is often made to lure unwary persons to the spot, and without their knowledge to lay the stone across the shadow cast by them

or over a thread surreptitiously attached to their persons, and superstition maintains that those whose shadows have thus been buried will die within the year. So real is this superstition that children are warned by their parents to keep away from building sites, lest their shadows should thus be tampered with; and Dr. Schmidt quotes the testimony of a monk in Zante, as to his conviction that only the fear of the law kept the people of that island from actually burying a human being under works of peculiar importance, such as bridges, where permanence was a primary consideration, a Jew or a Mussulman being especially marked out by tradition as suitable. The idea recurs not unfrequently in the popular poetry. In a song, of which there are several versions, of the building of the bridge of Arta, it is told how the bridge fell down as fast as it was built, until at last the master-builder dreamed a dream that it would only stand if his own wife were buried alive in the foundations. He therefore sends for her, bidding her dress in festival attire, and then finds an excuse to make her descend into the central pile, whereupon they heap the earth in over her, and thus the bridge stands fast.[1] In another song the same story is told of the bridge of Tricha, with the difference only that it is a little bird that whispers in the architect's ear how the pile may be made to stand.[2] A similar superstition connected with the building of the monastery Curtea de Argesh, in Wallachia, forms the subject of a fine poem by the Roumanian poet Alexandri.

Of these local genii, the popular mind pictures one as

[1] A translation of the "Bridge of Arta" will be found on p. 278.

[2] Lelékos, "Demotiké Anthología."

attached to every house. Their existence is often made known by a thin voice, as of a little child crying. Occasionally they are revealed in visible form, as a dog, or cat, or even a little pig; but most frequently they assume the shape of a snake, and such a reptile appearing in the house or on the threshing-floor is treated with the utmost respect; care is taken not to frighten it away, and milk or food is sometimes set apart for it, especially among the Albanians, as for the Kobold in the north; while many stories are told of the evil chance which has followed on the ill-treatment of these tutelary spirits—the falling in of the house, or the death of the householder.[3]

These tutelary genii are also represented as occupying mountain summits and grottoes, and more especially fountains and wells, where they are frequently supposed to take the shape of a Moor (*Ἀραπάδες*), and are propitiated before water is drawn. These Arapádes may also be compared to the Kobolds of German lore; they bring luck to those on whom they look with favourable eye, and reveal treasure in dreams; but should the secret be revealed, the treasure will turn to ashes. Those that they are displeased with they torment, and they are even said to have taken life when seriously offended. In Crete these "Arabs" reappear as "Saracens," and they play the part of bogie in threats to frighten children. The traveller Villoison found the genius of the fountain appealed to in the island of

[3] The ubiquity of the *genius loci* in the superstition of the ancients is well illustrated by the following lines of the devout Prudentius (b. 348 a.d.):—

> "Quanquam cur genium Romæ mihi fingitis unum?
> Cum portis, domibus, thermis, stabulis soleatis
> Assignare suos genios."—P. Contra Symmachum.

Mykonos under the name of Telóni ;[4] but this appellation is more frequently applied to the phenomenon known to sailors as St. Elmo's fire, represented, in fact, as a genius of the air.

In solitary places, in marshes, and especially in caves, the popular mind conceives the haunting spirit as assuming the form of a dragon (δράκος or δράκονταϛ). Sometimes it is a gigantic snake with a human head, always a creature monstrous to look upon, of supernatural strength, and malignant in disposition, who is supposed to guard a hidden treasure, as did the dragon of Colchis, or the watcher in the garden of the Hesperides. Such a dragon is said in Athenian folk tradition to have inhabited the ancient Hellenic fortress of Phylæ, and such names as Drakia or Drakontospela are not uncommon.

Trees of great age and size are also supposed to be inhabited by a guardian genius, a reminiscence perhaps of the Dryad. The woodsmen avoid lying under them ; and if they are obliged to cut down such a haunted tree, they will watch carefully for the moment when it is about to fall, and lie down flat on the ground keeping religious silence, in order to avoid the wrath of the *stoicheion*, which will issue from the trunk at the moment of severance.

The relics of antiquity have also frequently become objects of such stoicheiolatry, and travellers have recorded the difficulty with which pieces of ancient sculpture have been removed from their place, owing to the opposition of the country folk, who believed that the welfare of the district was essentially connected with these Palladia.

[4] Villoison, "Annales des Voyages," ii. p. 180.

Sometimes these local deities are at strife, as in a curious legend quoted by Passow, where the spirit of the plane tree waged war on the genius of the sea, and death was abroad in the land; again, in the phenomena of nature, in storm and snow and thunder, the popular mind conceives the elemental strife as a war between these elemental genii.

Even so it was in the ancient world; each spot had its peculiar tutelary deity, its nymph or naiad, its Hermes, Priapus, or Pan—the fountain, the copse, the thicket, the garden, the mountain gorge, or the stretch of sand by the sea. Simple among the Greeks, multiform and elaborate among the Romans, that familiar Polytheism of nature undoubtedly survives to this day.

Here may also be mentioned the attitude of the modern populations towards the Hellenes of old. Now that a regenerate Greece has adopted once more the appellation of Hellas, and that the name which all who border on the Ægean and all the dwellers of the islands claim with pride is that of Hellene, it may be presumed that a little historical knowledge will soon dispel the ancient tradition; but certainly at the beginning of the century, and still to-day perhaps in remoter mountain districts, the Hellenes were considered by the rude inhabitants to have been a race of giants, having no connection with the present occupiers of the land. They only knew that they were heathen—mythical beings of transcendent strength, who lifted huge stones, and built the mighty fortresses they still contemplate with superstitious awe. The Greeks of the last century called themselves Greeks, or, more commonly, Romans; the name Hellene belonged to that dim heathen race, "iron-men," "lion-like

men," "tall as trees," whose graves are still to be seen—for so they described the huge piles of ruin scattered through the land—speaking of the remote past as "in the days of the Hellenes." Thus it happens that a kind of magician-like reputation is attached to the memory of Alexander the Great, whose sisters the Nereids are in one Athenian child-tale said to be. Dr. Schmidt relates how an old woman in Andros maintained that there had been four ages in the world; the first was that of the dragons, the second that of the heathen Hellenes, the third that of the Venetians, and the fourth was that of the Turks;[5] a summary of her island's story which was, after all, not wholly unjustifiable.

But it is not in the spirit alone that the old nature deities survive in the superstition of the modern populations; the very names and attributes are often but little modified. Of such survivals, the most familar are the Nereids,[6] who, though still connected in the popular conception with the idea of water—the name being etymologically identifiable with *νερὸ*, the universal word for water in the modern language—now include all that tradition has retained of those mystical, half-human beings, who as Nymphs or Naiads, Oreads or Hamadryads, haunted the forest, the fountain, and the hill. Sometimes, indeed, they appear in the popular poetry as genuine water-fays, with pearls and corals in their sea-green hair. Generally speaking, they are looked upon as light-hearted, irrational,

[5] Schmidt, "Volksleben," p. 193.

[6] The modern name has many variations—*Νεράϊδες*, *Ἀνεράϊδες*, *Νερᾷδες*, *Νεραγίδες*, *Ἀνεράγδα*, &c. Sometimes they are merely alluded to as "the maidens" (*τὰ κουρίτσια*), or again as the "good mistresses" (*καλαῖς ἀρχόντισσαις*), like our "good people."

capricious beings, of more than human grace and beauty; their dress is white, they are decked with crowns and garlands of flowers, and wear a veil, which flutters behind them in the wind. Their nature is not always benignant; but although there is a feeling of awe, not unmixed with fear, in the popular attitude towards these creatures of their superstition, recalling the "nymphs that never sleep, goddesses of dread to the country folk"[7] of Theocritus, a general consent admits that they are harmless to those who do not cross them. Their supernatural gifts are the power of becoming suddenly invisible, of attenuation, which enables them to slip through chinks and key-holes, of riding through the air, and passing from one place to another with the swiftness of the wind. They are known to be accomplished in all womanly arts, to spin and weave, and sing as no mortal woman can. In fact, to be compared to a Nereid is the greatest of compliments; to be said to have a Nereid's eyes or a Nereid's hair is the praise that is bestowed on beauty; to be said to sing, to weave, or to sweep like a Nereid, is the praise that the housewife desires. They are not immortal, but their lives exceed by ten times those of men, and their beauty does not fade till death. Dancing and music are their passion, and many have seen their merry revels of a moonlit night on the level space of the threshing floor, and often the shepherds in the mountains have perceived that they were not piping in solitude, but that mystic dancers were keeping time to the notes of the reed-pipe, flitting among the shadows of the pines.

It is probable that in many cases the actual spots

[7] Theocritus, "Idyll," 13.

which superstition represents as haunted by such Nereids to-day were dedicated to the worship of Nymph or Naiad of old. I remember a village in the highlands of Arcadia, in the neighbourhood of which was a spring and a grotto which bore evidences of the worship of the nymph to whom tradition maintained that it had been sacred, where the expression is still in use among the men when they wish to describe the beauty of one of the village maids, "She looks like the nymph under the tree." And how deeply rooted is the belief is illustrated by an experience, recorded by the historian Soutzo, who was told by a peasant of Argos of a Nereid who used by day to lay out her clothes upon the rocks to dry. Upon his expressing his scepticism, the peasant repeatedly crossed himself, and said, "What, do you not believe in apparitions?"

In a story mentioned by Fauriel in the introduction to his Collection of Popular Songs, there is a curious blending of the Oread myth with a reminiscence of Pan or of the Satyrs. He quotes from the notes of an English traveller, who had heard it among the Mainotes of the range of Taygetus. "Three maids," the legend runs, "of exquisite beauty, but with the legs and the feet of a goat, are ever dancing round the summit of Scardamyla. No man may approach them with impunity, and should any one unwittingly venture within the charmed precinct, he is fondled and embraced and made much of; but, none the less, it is his doom to be thrown headlong from the precipice, and dashed to pieces on the rocks below." These mountain fays would undoubtedly be described as Nereids in the district from which the legend hails; but their

malignant nature rather partakes of the character ascribed to the Sirens, of whom also there is an echo of suggestion in a popular song which another English traveller heard sung in the neighbourhood of Cape Malea. He was unable to give me the text, but the substance of it ran: A fair maid sat on a rock and sang to the ships that passed under. There came a ship from Prevesa that way, and on board they heard her sing. The captain bade them shorten sail, and they stopped to listen. The burden of her song, however, with the inconsequence of the popular muse, was only that her husband had sent her to the mountain to get hare's cheese,[8] that she was very long away, and that when she came back he had married another wife.

Mineral springs and healing-waters are especially under the protection of the Nereids, and those who drink of them do so in silence and with a certain awe. So Pausanias, in describing the river Anigrus, mentions a cavern by the river sacred to the Anigridan nymphs, and states that whoever bathes in this stream, the waters of which have a very foul smell, will be cured of all skin diseases, if he first makes due prayer to the nymphs, and pays the proper sacrifice.[9] There exists, moreover, in the Anthology a little dedicatory poem by the poetess Moero, written for Cleonymus to the "Nymphs of Anigrus, maidens of the river." The dripping water of a spring in a grotto near Kotzanes, in Macedonia, is said to issue from the Nereids' breasts, and to cure all human ills. Those

[8] A mysterious product, not unfrequently alluded to in popular song and story.

[9] Pausanias, book v. (Eliacs), chap. v.

who would drink of it must enter the cave with a torch or lamp in one hand, and a pitcher in the other, which they must fill with the water, and leaving some scrap of their clothing behind them, must turn round without being scared by the noises they may hear within, and quit the cave without ever looking back. If any of these conditions are unfulfilled, the water will lose its power.[1]

It is believed that Nereids, though possessing certain supernatural gifts, can be brought under human control by those who succeed in snatching some portion of their garments and keeping it closely hidden. It is generally the veil which is thus seized, and she who has lost it must forego her power of invisibility, and follow the ravisher as his slave. Thus many stories are told of the loves of Nereids and mortals, and here and there among the villagers certain families are pointed out as of Nereid descent. Such a family is said to exist in the little village of Menidhi, near Athens.[2] However, the Nereid bride soon tires of human companionship, and longs for the freedom of the mountains; so she is for ever looking for the stolen veil with which the secret of her servitude is linked, and if she finds it, or succeeds in persuading her husband to restore it, she will disappear and leave him, although, if she has become a mother, she can never be admitted again to the choir of her sisters. This belief seems tolerably universal, and Dr. Schmidt found further that the conviction prevails in the island of Cephalonia, that she would yet have to return to her husband after seven years, if during all this while he never left the house.

[1] Politis, "Mythologia" (1871), pt. i. p. 87.

[2] Kamporoglou, Hist. Ath.

Sometimes it is the Nereid herself who falls in love with the mortal, and those who are thus favoured are sure of all good fortune and success as long as their love remains faithful; but should her lover prove untrue, the Nereid's vengeance is unerring, and his life may prove the forfeit.[3]

One curious story of the union of a Nereid with a mortal, told in the Cretica of Chourmouzi, may well be quoted here, because it has a special interest, containing, as it does, traces of connection with the oldest Hellenic myths.[4] The tale was told to the author some sixty years ago by an aged peasant, who described it as handed down to him by his grandfather, in connection with a grotto in the province of Pediada, in the island of Crete, which contains a spring of excellent water, and is known to all the dwellers round as the Nereids' cave. It runs as follows: A youth of the village of Sgourokepháli, who had great skill upon the lyre, used to accompany the Nereids to their cave and play to them. One of them more especially excited his admiration, and he appealed to a wise old woman of his village to reveal to him how he might gain her for his bride. The old woman bade him seize her by the hair when the time approached at which the cock crows, and never let go, whatever forms she might assume in order to terrify him or to elude his grasp, until the cock had crowed. Accordingly, the next time the Nereids took him to their cave, he played, as was his wont, for them to dance to; but when the hour of cock-crow drew near, he flung the lyre aside and

[3] For specimens of such tales of the loves of Nereids, see Hahn's "Griechische und Albanesische Märchen."

[4] The tale of Peleus and Thetis. Cp. Ovid, "Met." ix. 249, &c.

clutched his beloved by the hair. At once she changed her aspect, and turned under his hand, like Proteus, into a dog, then into a snake, a camel, and at last into the semblance of fire. Just then the cock crew, the other Nereids disappeared, and his prisoner, reassuming her natural form, followed him quietly to the village, where within the space of a year she bore him a son. But all this while she was never heard to utter a word. Again he had recourse to the wise woman to aid him in breaking this spell of silence. She instructed him to heat the oven, which stands outside every Greek cottage, and then taking their boy, to say to the Nereid wife, "As thou wilt not speak to me, I mean to burn the child," and to feign the action of doing so. He again took her advice, and the Nereid found her voice, but only to cry, "You hound, let go my child!" as she tore the infant from his hands and fled. The story goes on to say, that, being a mother, she could not return to her sisters, and took up her abode in a neighbouring fountain, where now and then she might be seen holding the child in her arms.[5]

In some stories a masculine form of the word occurs, *Νεράιδος*, the husband of the Nereid. Such a being plays a part in an account given me by the well-known Cretan chieftain, Captain Christodoulaki, of a fellow Sphakiote, whom he had known well, who was or pretended to be a very mysterious person, and had uncanny relations with powers mystical. As a child, he had disappeared for a long while, and was sought for all

[5] This story was repeated in 1866 to Mr. W. J. Stillman, at that time U S. Consul in Crete, by a shepherd, apparently respecting the same cave. His story was precisely similar in all details, except that in his version the child was actually thrown into the oven, and that only then the Nereid found her voice.

over the mountains. It was only after long seeking that his brother, who was calling his name, heard his voice answered, and going to the spot, found him in a strangely dazed condition. At length, he related that he had been carried off by a man and a woman to the high point where he was found ; he had heard the voices of the seekers calling, but was prevented from answering by the woman, for they were Nereids. At last, the man and the woman fell out, and he took the opportunity of their coming to blows to answer the cry, but when his brother drew near, the Nereids disappeared.

From Crete also comes another story in which such male Nereids occur, taken down by the traveller Pashley in the early part of this century, as he heard it from the lips of a Sphakiote. Two men, his informant told him, went one fine moonlight night into the mountains to hunt the Cretan wild goat. They heard a great tumult, and at first supposed it to be a company of people coming to fetch snow, to take to the city ; but as they drew nearer, they heard the sound of musical instruments. Soon they discovered these were not mortals, but an assemblage of goblin beings, all clothed in varied garments, "Both men and women, on foot and on horseback, a multitude of people ; and the men were white as doves, and the women beautiful as the sunbeams." Also it was evident that they were carrying something which resembled a bier. The mountaineers determined to shoot at the aërial host as they passed along singing—

> "We go, we go to fetch the lady bride
> From the steep rock, a solitary nymph."

As the shot was fired, those who were last in the procession

exclaimed, "They've murdered our bridegroom—they've murdered our bridegroom!" and as they thus exclaimed, they wept, and shrieked, and fled.[6]

There must have existed among the ancient Greeks, as there undoubtedly exists among the modern populations of this land, some subtle instinct suggesting a divinity inherent in certain spots of earth of exceptional beauty, of striking grandeur, or of solitude; some close sympathy with nature, due rather to feeling than to a rational process, such as that which has evoked the nature-lore of Northern poets. It is possible that this very susceptibility makes it difficult for them to analyse the feeling, and reason upon it, and we may be quite wrong in attributing to the Southern character a want of appreciation of what in reality they keenly feel, as indeed they show when placed in other surroundings. This same instinct perhaps it was that suggested the anxious sense of the weirdness of midday, in the pause and rest of nature in a summer land through the hottest hours of noon, which, indeed, all who are sensitive to the impressions of nature will acknowledge has some intangible influence on man and beast, in its stillness, its intensity, its brilliance, and which can only be compared to the influence of the full moon on a summer night in the South. It was this feeling which found expression in the representation of the sleep of Pan, set in the mouth of the swain of Theocritus—

> "O shepherd, not at noon, we may not pipe at noon,
> For Pan we dread, who then comes from the chase
> Weary, and takes his rest."[7]

[6] Pashley, "Travels in Crete," vol. ii. p. 217.

[7] Theoc., "Idyll" i.

This feeling which is implied in the distich of Ovid—

> "Grant we meet not the Dryads nor Dian face to face,
> Nor Faunus, when at noon he walks abroad"—[8]

Mediæval writers not unfrequently allude to the midday demon,[9] and a somewhat analogous dread of the noon hours I remember to have found among the Wends of Lusatia, where the shores of a little lake in the middle of the Spree marshlands are avoided between the hours of eleven and noon, for fear of the Pschesponitza, the midday witch, who lames or injures all that come in her way.

We need, therefore, not be surprised to find that the popular mind is filled with little awes respecting the danger of approaching certain spots at noon: cross-ways and mills are under the ban, and especially the neighbourhood of streams and springs is to be shunned, for the haunting Nereids grow harmful at this hour, and children are warned not to stray out of sight, for the Nereids have been known to strike their victim dumb, especially if he replies to their enticing questions when they speak him fair. In the island of Melos they are actually called by the name of *Μεσημεργιάταις*, the "midday maidens." There is on the summit of Mount Hymettus a small round space known as the "level," which is carefully avoided at the hour of noon by any shepherds who may be pasturing their flocks on the mountain, and they tell the story of one who had in ignorance ventured within the charmed circle, and who was at once overpowered by a whirling wind which

[8] Ovid, "Fasti." iv. 761.

[9] Dr. Schmidt points out that in the Septuagint version of the 91st Psalm, "Thou shalt not be afraid . . . . for the destruction that wasteth at noonday," is rendered by *ἀπὸ συμπτώματος καὶ δαιμονίου μεσημβρινοῦ.*

knocked him prostrate, and kept him a prisoner there till late in the afternoon.

An uncanny side to these personified materializations of the spirit of nature was conceived by the ancients, who gave the name of "Nympholepsy" to a disturbance of the rational mental state. It is curious to find a reference to the current superstition put into the mouth of Socrates in the "Phædrus."[1] Those whom the nymphs had influenced became afflicted with depression, with a desire for solitude, and strange fits of frenzy, and occasionally the death of children is referred to in monumental inscriptions as the work of the nymphs. Similarly, to-day, a tendency to melancholy, a preference for solitude is also ascribed to the pernicious influence of the Nereids—those who have been struck by them fly from their kind—

> "Es treibt ein wildes Sehnen
> Hinauf zur Waldeshöhe;"

they wander out by lonely paths, returning late at night, and death overtakes them young. People born on a Saturday are said to be especially susceptible to the Nereids' spell.

In another characteristic of the Nereids there may, perhaps, be detected a reminiscence of the Harpies. The whirlwind, which is not uncommon in Greece, even in summer, is symptomatic of their presence, and in this wind they lift the wayfarer off his feet and bear him away through the air. Therefore, those who see the dead leaves circling and the dust, and feel the whirlwind near, bow down the head and whisper, "Milk and honey be in thy path," the due offering to propitiate these

[1] Plato, "Phædrus," 238.

deities of the storm.[2] Such a story is told in Athens of the Nereids who haunt the stream known as the Kakoremma, and who are said to fling stones at those who approach the spot. A young man, who had been hunting, sat down there to rest under a tree, when he heard the sound of fairy music, and rose to see whence it proceeded. Suddenly he was aware of a rushing wind that snatched him up and whirled him round and round, and bore him at last stunned and confused to the top of a high tree, where he was flung upon a golden bed. There he was kept eight days and nights bound and unable to move. The ninth day he was liberated, and climbing down, escaped. But he remained for as many days in a half-dazed condition, till at last he went to church, and so the spell was broken.[3]

It has been mentioned in an earlier chapter that Nereids are supposed to steal newly-born children, and sometimes to substitute their own, like fairies in other lands. Therefore, the house-door is kept shut for many days after a child is born; and Greek mothers never leave their babies to the care of older brothers and sisters, but take them out when they go to the fields, and sling them in their little leather hammocks to a tree, or to three sticks crossed in a shady place, where they may be continually kept in view.

Finally, the Nereids in their capacity as water-fays, preside over and control a ceremony known as the "Kledona," which takes place on St. John's Day (June

[2] Cp. Theoc., "Idyll" v. "And I will dedicate a great bowl of white milk to the nymphs."

[3] Kamporoglou, Hist. Ath.

24, o.s.). The previous evening a new earthen jar is filled with water by a boy ; a girl may fill it, but a boy is better, that all the conditions may be complete. Whoever fills it must not speak while doing so, and if spoken to must not answer. Then a company of girls who have associated themselves together to test their fortune by the "Kledona," drop into the water, each for herself, some token which will be easily recognizable—a button, a ring, a key, and so on. The jar is next covered with a cloth, securely fastened, and left out all night that the Nereids may place it under a spell. In the morning all the girls meet, and the jar is then opened by the same individual who closed it. The girls then each in turn sing a rhyming distich in the nature of a love motto, while the person holding the jar dives in the hand and brings out the first object touched. The distich which accompanies the extraction is held to apply to the girl to whom the object in question belongs.

One other form of divination by water was told me by a girl from the island of Andros, where she said it was the custom for girls to hold a mirror over a well, and to look in it for the face of their future husband reflected from the well below. My informant added that she knew that the process was infallible, for a servant girl there had lately tried her fate, and saw reflected in the mirror the face of her master, a wealthy man who was already married. In spite of the apparent improbability of such a prospect being realized, the wife soon after died, and the master married his maid.

The *Lamiæ* or *Lamnæ* (*Λαμία*, *Λάμνα*, or *Λάμνισσα*), who sometimes figure singly in popular tradition and

sometimes in companies, are akin to the Nereids, but always malign in influence. In classical lore, the Lamia is of frequent occurrence, but her characteristics are not always identical. In the older myth, she may perhaps be counted among the deities of the sea. Aristophanes and Philostratus represent her along with the Mormo and Empusa, as a monstrous and malignant being;[4] but she is also able to assume an attractive form, the better to ensnare her victim. So in the modern folk-poetry the Lamia occasionally appears as a nymph who dances to the shepherd and lures him to his doom,[5] and as such is generally spoken of as a spirit of the sea or the seashore, while in Elis she is even described as the queen of the Nereids. More frequently, however, she is portrayed as a monstrosity, hideous and deformed, hungry for human flesh to eat, partaking rather of the nature of the Harpy, the Gorgon, or the Empusa, which last apparition of dread is said still to find believers in the valley of the Spercheius.

Athenian folk-lore has a story of a Lamia who hid in a well, and lived on the blood of living beasts. At length she was shot by a peasant, whose two oxen had thus been destroyed; none had ventured to fire at her before, for fear the bullets would return and strike their owner, but this peasant shot with the left hand. The body of the Lamia was three fathoms long, and where her blood had dripped, no green thing would ever grow. Another

[4] Horace alludes to the current superstition :—

"Nec, quod cumque volet, poscat sibi fabula credi"
Neu pransæ Lamiæ vivum puerum alvo.—(Ars. Poet. 340);

and Lucian in the "Philopseudes" represents the Mormo and Lamia as bugbears to children.

[5] See p. 279.

Lamia is the *Mora*, and she has great possessions. She is abroad by night only, and if she espies a sleeper by the road, she sits upon his chest and grows so heavy that he "bellows like a bull." But if by chance her destined victim were not quite fast asleep, and seeing her approach could stealthily snatch her cap, she would fall into his power, and would grant him all he wished to get her cap back again.[6]

Another mysterious evil spirit of antiquity, the *Gillo*, whose origin may be traced to the island of Lesbos, is frequently alluded to by mediæval writers. More universal to-day is the dread of the *Strigla* (στρίγλαις), the *Strix* of the Romans.[7] In modern Italy the *Strega*, like the Greek *Strigla*, is looked upon as a witch-woman, who has the power of changing her form, and flying by night in the shape of a crow, sucking human blood, with breath of deadly poison; distinct, however, from the vampire, which is generally held to be a material resuscitation of a dead person, while the Strigla is a living being who has assumed a birdlike form. This view of the Strix is curiously illustrated by a law of Charlemagne's for the province of Saxony, which decrees the penalty of capital punishment on any "who led away by the devil to believe, after the manner of pagans, that a certain man or women be a Strix, and feed upon human beings, should therefore burn such, or distribute their

[6] Kamporoglou, Hist. Ath., Παραδόσεις.

[7] Cp. Ovid—

"Carpere dicuntur lactentia viscera rostro
Et plenum poto sanguine guttur habent:
Est illis strigibus nomen."

A fragment of an ancient popular song exorcising the Strix is found in Festus.

flesh to be eaten, or eat thereof himself."[8] Such it appears was the barbarous antidote, as it formerly was in Russia and Poland against the vampire, where blood of the body from which it was supposed to emanate was eaten in a paste of meal.

The modern Strix appears more rarely in a masculine form (*στρίγλος*), and the name is applied as an epithet of hatred or contempt to old men as well as to aged crones who have an uncanny reputation. In this application it is about equivalent to our witch.

The genuine vampire is the Vourkólakas, of whom a number of stories are still current, though Colonel Leake more than fifty years ago expressed the opinion that it would be difficult in Greece to find any one who still believed in such a barbarous superstition. The Albanians call it Wurwolakas, and the name has a number of slightly varying forms in different parts of Greece.[9] The word itself is undoubtedly of Slavonic origin, being found in Bohemia, Dalmatia, Montenegro, Servia, and Bulgaria; while it reappears as Vilkolak among the Poles, with the signification rather of weir-wolf than vampire. The superstition itself is, however, of extreme antiquity, and the name only was introduced by the Slavonic immigrants, for we find the vampire in Crete and Rhodes, where the Slaves never penetrated, under the name of Katakhanás (*καταχανὰς*), the "destroyer," in Tenos as the Anakathouménos (*Ανακαθούμενος*), the "snatcher," and again in Cyprus as the Sarkoménos (*Σαρκομένος*), a name implying either that the dead body from which the vampire issues

[8] "Capitularia pro partibus Saxoniæ," i. 6.

[9] *Βουρκόλακας, Βρυκόλακας, Βουρδόλακας*, &c., &c.

has retained its flesh, or that it must be gorged with flesh.

It is not necessary here to point out what traces of vampirism are to be found in the oldest literatures; it will be sufficient for the present purpose to indicate that there is suggestion of such a belief in classical authors.

The idea most generally prevailing with regard to vampires, is that they are dead folk who cannot rest in their graves, and who prey upon the living, in order to obtain the draught of blood which is essential to them for the renewal of their vitality. The analogy immediately suggests itself of the desire of the dead souls, evoked by Odysseus, to drink the blood of the sacrifice, and the instructions of Circe, that he should suffer none to taste it until Teiresias had drunk and prophesied.[1] It would seem that the drinking of blood was considered a necessary condition of temporary vitality, and doubtless it was some such popular superstition which was embodied in the epic. The same idea may perhaps underlie the human sacrifice to the mighty dead as practised among primitive people. At the grave of Patroclus, twelve Trojan prisoners were slain,[2] and the "Hecuba" of Euripides records the immolation of Polyxena, to appease the shade of Achilles, who is invited by Neoptolemus to drink the maiden's blood.

Pausanias also describes the destruction of infants at Corinth through the agency of Medea's murdered sons,[3] and tells a similar story of one of the companions of

[1] Odyssey, ix. 48, &c.

[2] Iliad, xxiii. 181, &c.

[3] Paus., ii. 3.

Odysseus, who was stoned to death by the inhabitants of Temessa, where he had ravished a virgin. He became a "demon," and preyed upon the inhabitants of Temessa in revenge, until the Pythian deity, called into consultation, found a way for them out of their troubles.[4] Again, this indefatigable collector of myths and miracles tells us how the land of Orchomenus was afflicted by a spectre, which sat upon a stone, and that when the oracle was consulted, its answer was that the men of Orchomenos should search for and bury the remains of Actæon; make a brazen image of the spectre, and fasten it to the stone. In the "Phædo" of Plato there is allusion to the soul which, being impure at its release, haunts graves and tombs, and still clings to the visible; and many suggestive passages might be cited from later writers. Finally, the Mormo, the Empusa, and the Lamia possessed the blood-sucking reputation of the vampire in the popular superstitions of antiquity.

And here it may be mentioned that the Vourkólakas is not invariably the blood-sucking vampire in recent tradition, but that the name is sometimes extended to include mere spectres of the departed who return to earth, and that in this sense, at any rate, the superstition is by no means so extinct as Colonel Leake appears to have believed.[5] In the memoirs of M. Nicholas Dragoumis there is an interesting account of its effect on the population of Naxos, where early in the thirties a cholera epidemic had carried off a great number of victims. The rumour was circulated that the Naxian dead in the other world were so numerous that they

[4] Paus., vi. 6.

[5] Leake, "Northern Greece," vol. iv. chap. 38.

had overpowered Charos, and were coming back again to earth to take possession of their own. The fear of these Vourkolakes, as they called them, was so great that the inhabitants rushed to their houses at sunset, barred doors and windows, and piled the furniture against them ; but often in vain, for the spectres entered through the keyholes and scared the living for many an anxious day.[6]

The Vourkólakas is, however, generally ravenous. In the Naxian story, those who saw them referred to their horrible appearance and their urgent demands for food. Sometimes, again, they are represented as robbing eggs and cattle. When they are bent upon human prey it is with their nearest relatives that they begin ; but if the husband be abroad at the time of their visit, and only the wife at home, as Pashley suggestively remarks in his account of the Cretan Katakhanás, she generally survives the interview.

Colonel Leake, in the passage above referred to, states that the tradition connected with these vampires in Epirus was as follows : "The devil is supposed to enter the Vourkólaka, who, rising from his grave, torments first his nearest relations and then others, causing their death or loss of health. The remedy is to dig up the body, and if, after it has been exorcised by the priest, the demon still persists in annoying the living, to cut the body into small pieces, and, if that be not sufficient, to burn it." He goes on to describe the difficulties which the Metropolitan of Grevena had met with in quieting the vampires of his province. To their credit be it said, the Orthodox bishops have always struggled hard

[6] N. Δραγούμης. Ἱστόρικαι Ἀναμνήσεις, vol. i. p. 117.

to put down such superstitions, though not always with success.

Leo Allatius, in his essay on the superstitions of the Greeks, also inclines to the theory that it is a demon which enters the body of the dead man, which in consequence of his sins has not disintegrated. He further records that in Chios the opinion prevailed that when the Vourkólakas called, knocking at the door, he who should reply was doomed to be his victim. But as the spectre does not call twice, the inhabitants never answer a first summons, but if it be repeated they know there is nothing to fear.[7]

In Albania it is maintained that only on Fridays and Saturdays can the vampire be found in his grave; and in Greece he is said only to rest quietly on the latter. It was on these days, therefore, that the corpse would be exhumed, and tradition records that it was invariably found undecomposed.[8] The burning of a body which had once been anointed with holy oil would, of course, only be attempted as a last resource; but not long ago a rumour was circulated in the Athenian press that such a proceeding had taken place quite recently in a deme of the island of Andros.

The Benedictine Abbot, Augustine Calmet, in his book on magic, witchcraft, and superstition, quotes, not without a certain scepticism, the account of a singular experiment made at Constantinople in the 15th century, at the instance of the Sultan, to test the superstition prevalent among the Christian Greeks, that the bodies of those who died under excommunication would not

[7] "De quorundam Graecorum Superstitionibus," p. 142, &c.

[8] Comp. p. 127.

decay in the grave. The Patriarch, therefore, caused the grave of a woman to be opened who had been placed under the ban for participation in a scandal in which an archbishop had been concerned, and the body was found intact, but black and swollen. It was accordingly enclosed in a chest, which was locked and sealed with the Sultan's own seal. The Patriarch, meantime, offered prayer, and revoked the sentence of excommunication. Three days later the chest was opened, whereupon it was found that the body had fallen to dust.

A somewhat analogous tale is told by Sir Paul Ricaut, who was for many years British Ambassador at Constantinople, and previously consul at Smyrna, during the latter half of the 17th century. His authority was a monk named Sophronius, of high standing in Smyrna, who had himself been an eye-witness of what he related in the island of Milos, where the inhabitants had been for a long time disturbed by a ghastly nocturnal apparition, which was supposed to proceed from the grave of a man who had died excommunicated. The grave was accordingly opened, and the body was found intact, with the veins full of blood. The monks of St. Basil then took counsel together, and their collective wisdom decided that the proper course to take was to cut the body up and boil it in wine, for so tradition prescribed. The relatives of the deceased, however, succeeded in having the execution of this verdict postponed, and sent to Constantinople to implore the Patriarch to revoke the excommunication. Meanwhile, the body was placed in the Church, where masses were continually said for the repose of the soul. Now, it happened one day that Sophronius himself was directing

the ceremonies, when a sudden crack was heard in the coffin. It was opened, and then it was seen that the body was all consumed away, like that of a man who had been "dead for seven years." The hour of this occurrence was duly noted, and when the deputation returned from Constantinople, it was discovered that it coincided precisely with the time when the Patriarch had rescinded the dead man's sentence.

The islanders appear to have been especially addicted to the belief in this superstition. Hydra is said to have been formerly infected by vampires, but a zealous bishop succeeded in transferring them all to the unoccupied island of Therasia, in the Santorin group, where they still walk at night, but being unable to cross salt water, find no one to torment; and Tournefort in 1701 was eye-witness of the laying of such a Vourkólakas, who haunted the island of Myconos, and whose body was not only transferred to the neighbouring islet of St. George, but was there consumed with fire.

In examining the causes to which the popular mind ascribes vampirism, it becomes evident that at sometime or another the Church must have turned a prevailing superstition to account, in order to exercise a terrorizing influence against the violation of its canons. We have seen that as late as the 18th century the opinion still prevailed that those who die under the ban of excommunication are liable to become vampires, a notion not wholly extinct to-day, though sentences of excommunication are rarer. A Cretan told me that the same fate befell those at whose baptism some portion of the ceremony had been left incomplete; and in Cephalonia marriage with a Koumbáros is said to have the same

effect. Children conceived upon a great religious festival are also under the ban, as well as those who have received a parent's curse. But there are other causes which prevent the dead from resting. Those over whose corpse a cat has jumped, and those who die a violent death, are liable to wander from their graves; and the Mainotes maintain that only when a murder is avenged will its victim cease to haunt the earth.

In conclusion, the following story, taken down word for word by Mr. Pashley during his travels in Crete, furnishes a curious instance of the extravagance of a superstition which, though rapidly disappearing, is still not wholly extinct.[9]

"Once on a time, the village of Kalikrati, in the district of Sfakiá, was haunted by a Katakhanás, and people did not know what man he was or from what part. This Katakhanás destroyed both children and many full-grown men; and desolated both that village and many others. They had buried him at the Church of St. George at Kalikrati, and in those times he was a man of note, and they had built an arch over his grave. Now, a certain shepherd, his mutual Synteknos,[1] was tending his sheep and goats near the church, and on being caught by a shower, he went to the sepulchre that he might be shaded from the rain. Afterwards, he determined to sleep, and to pass the night there, and after taking off his arms, he placed them by the stone which served him as his pillow, cross wise. And people might say that it was on this account that the Katakhanás was not permitted to leave his tomb. During the night, then, as he wished to go out again, that he might destroy men, he said to the shepherd, 'Gossip, get up hence, for I have some business that requires me to come out.' The shepherd answered him not, either the first time, or the second, or the third: for thus he knew that the man had become a

[9] Pashley, "Travels in Crete," ii. chap. 36. London, 1837.

[1] A word used to describe the relation of a person to his godchild's father. The spiritual father and the natural father being brothers, as it were.

Katakhanás, and that it was he who had done all those evil deeds. On this account he said to him, on the fourth time of his speaking, 'I shall not get up hence, gossip, for I fear that you are no better than you should be, and may do me some mischief; but if I must get up, swear to me by your winding-sheet,[2] that you will not hurt me, and on this I will get up. And he did not pronounce the proposed words, but said other things.' Nevertheless, when the shepherd did not suffer him to get up, he swore to him as he wished. On this he got up, and, taking his arms, removed them away from the monument, and the Katakhanás came forth, and, after greeting the shepherd, said to him, 'Gossip, you must not go away, but sit down here, for I have some business which I must go after; but I shall return within the hour, for I have something to say to you.' So the shepherd waited for him.

"And the Katakhanás went a distance of about ten miles, where there was a couple recently married, and he destroyed them. On his return his gossip saw that he was carrying some liver, his hands being moistened with blood; and, as he carried it, he blew into it, just as the butcher does, to increase the size of the liver. And he showed his gossip that it was cooked, as if it had been done on the fire. After this he said, 'Let us sit down, gossip, that we may eat.' And the shepherd pretended to eat it, but only swallowed dry bread, and kept dropping the liver into his bosom. Therefore, when the hour for their separation arrived, the Katakhanás said to the shepherd, 'Gossip, this which you have seen you must not mention, for if you do, my twenty nails will be fixed in your children and yourself.' Yet the shepherd lost no time, but gave information to priests and others, and they went to the tomb, and there they found the Katakhanás just as he had been buried. And all people became satisfied that it was he who had done all the evil deeds. On this account they collected a great deal of wood, and they cast him on it, and burnt him. His gossip was not present, but when the Katakhanás was already half consumed, he too came forward in order that he might enjoy the ceremony. And the Katakhanás cast, as it were, a single spot of blood, and it fell upon his foot, which wasted away as if it had been roasted on a

[2] The only oath binding on a vampire.

fire. On this account they sifted even the ashes, and found the little finger-nail of the Katakhanás unburnt, and burnt it too."

Pashley's experience, of course, dates back a good many years, but I was myself told a story in Crete of a man well known to my informant, who had the power of foretelling when people were going to die. From time to time this man would fall ill in a mysterious manner, and his invariable explanation was that the dead whose doom he had foretold were returning as Katakhanádes to torment him in various manners, though it would seem rather as ghosts of the common sort than as vampires, and in this explanation he appeared to be perfectly sincere.

It would be strange if, with such ample survival of the ancient polytheism in modern lore, there were no reminiscence of the Fauns, the Satyrs, and the Pans of the olden world. And so we shall find that in one of the most universal and widespread superstitions, that dual half-human nature of these dwellers in the forest, is blended with, and at the same time obscured by, the non-Hellenic conceptions of elf and gnome.[3]

The *Kalikantsari*, to adopt their most general appellation, are diminutive beings, with the legs of an ass or goat, hirsute of body, and swarthy of skin ; benign for the most part in character, though mischievous and tricksy ; addicted to dancing, and very amatory in disposition, who, if they get the opportunity, will carry fair women away to the caves they haunt, during the twelve days for which they are suffered to emerge into the upper air, between Christmas and the Epiphany. It

[3] Sir Charles Newton, in his "Travels and Discoveries," mentions that Rhodian peasants described their woods as haunted by a dancer with the legs and tail of a goat.

is only at night that they issue from caves and dens, where they spend the day feasting on toads and lizards. When the twelve days of their sojourn are past they return to the bowels of the earth, where once more they set to work, trying to saw through the trunk of the great tree by which it is supported.

Several etymologies of the name have been suggested. It is written as *Καληκάντσαρος*, *Κοληκάντσαρος*, or *Καλκάτσαρος*; or, again, *Λυκοκάντζαρος*, while in Albanian the root reappears in *Καρκαντζόλοι*.

Some have pretended that *Καλη* or *Κολη* is a mere metathesis of *λυκο*;[4] while *κάντσαρος* is a vulgar form of *κάνθαρος*, and that the word signifies, therefore, wolf-beetle, the former referring to the supposed hirsute appearance of these creatures, the latter to the dark skin with which they are credited. Others, again, have interpreted the first part of the word as a simple euphemism.[5] Dr. Schmidt, however, has suggested with more probability that the Greek word is derived through the Albanian Karkandsoli, from the Turkish Kara-kond-jolos ( = loup-garou). In Athens the Kalikantsari are known by the name of Kolovelónes (*Κωλοβελόνης*), which may also be a corruption of the name of a mischievous Albanian sprite, but which etymologically has a meaning not incongruous with the popular conception of the creatures, namely "needle-back."[6]

These satyr-goblins are said to become visible a little before midnight. Sometimes they are represented

[4] The value of the vowels *ι*, *η*, and *υ* is identical, and they are promiscuously used by the illiterate in spelling.

[5] *Ἐφήμερις τῶν Φιλωμάθων*, 1862, No. 437.

[6] If spelt with an *ο* instead of an *ω*, it might be traced to *κολοβός*, deformed.

with one leg only like that of a goat or ass, but more commonly both the legs are those of animals. During the twelve days of their presence people keep all shut at night for fear they should get into the house; but those who keep a black cock[7] are safe, for the little beings have a mortal aversion to that animal, as they also have to fire. Their mischievous nature leads them into tricks, the commonest of which is the defiling of wells and fountains. Hot coals are, therefore, dropped into the water on these twelve nights, and burnt sticks laid across the wells to keep the Kalikantsari away. They have wives, presumably those whom they have carried off, for the name has no feminine form, and children, and they are said to be devotedly attached to their male offspring.

A story was told me in Spezza, which my informant had from his grandfather, of the adventures of a woman of that island with these singular beings. She had gone with two others to collect wood on the far side of the island, some distance from the town, and in the neighbourhood of a cave by the sea, with which a number of other superstitions are connected, when suddenly she disappeared, and all efforts of her companions to find her proved unavailing. Some days later a caïque was rounding the point of the island, when the sailors saw the missing woman standing on the rocks. They went ashore and brought her back to the town, but she had been struck dumb and could give no account of herself. It was only after she had been taken to church, and that the rites had been duly performed by which evil spirits are exorcised, that she regained the power of speech,

[7] Πανδῶρα, vol. xvi. No. 454.

and then related that she had been carried off by the Kalikantsari, who had taken away her voice that she might not be able to tell.

Side by side with this elfin view of the Kalikantsari, there is another aspect, in which they approach more nearly to the conception of the weir-wolf, and the original significance of the Turkish derivative. In Crete, infants born at Christmas are said to become Kalikantsari, the punishment for the sin of the parents being thus visited on the children, who are impiously conceived, and sacrilegiously brought into the world on a day which should admit of no rivalry.[8] Leo Allatius, whose experiences are chiefly concerned with the island of Chios, asserts that all children born between Christmas and New Year's day are involved in a similar doom, and in Zante the superstition prevailed as regards Christmas eve. Such weir-wolves are eminently malignant in character during the twelve days of their reign; the devil enters into the human being, and drives him abroad at night hither and thither. The fiend-possessed creature rends those he meets with claws like a tiger, flings them down, and sitting on their chests, leaves them half suffocated and nearly dead with fright.

Generally speaking, however, the Kalikantsari are easily deceived, and there are plenty of antidotes which disarm their power of mischief. When such a one asks, as he will do, if you meet him, "Will you have tow of me or lead?" you have only to answer, "Tow," and his influence is gone. Or a sieve may be handed to him, whereupon he will set to work to count the holes, and as

[8] Politis, "Neoell. Myth.," pt. i. p. 70.

he cannot count beyond two, this will take him till the morning.[9] In Athenian folk-lore, there is a story of the trick played upon them by a woman whom the Kolovelónides had taken by night, and whose bread they wanted to steal. She consented to go with them, but proposed first to tell them a story. The story was a long one, and during the telling the first cock crew. "Black!" said the goblins, "we are not afraid of you:" meaning that it was still night. As she proceeded with her story, a second cock crew, "Red!" they cried, "we are not afraid of you:" for it was only nearing dawn. But before the story was ended, the third cock crew, "White!" they exclaimed, meaning it was day, and so ran off, singing the song with which they always disappear at the Epiphany, the season when the priest goes round to bless the houses, the wells, and the fountains and to sprinkle them with consecrated water[1]:—

| | |
|---|---|
| *Φεύγατε, νὰ φεύγωμεν* | Fly, let us fly away! |
| *Γίατ' ἔρχετ' ὁ Τουρλόπαπας* | For here comes the fat Pappas, |
| *Μὲ τὴν ἁγιαστῆρά του* | With his holy water |
| *Καὶ μὲ τὴ πλαστῆρά του·* | And his sprinkling brush; |
| *Καὶ θελε μᾶς ῥαντίσει* | And he will sprinkle us, |
| *Καὶ πλιὰ μᾶς μαγαρίσει.*[2] | And so contaminate us. |

It has been pointed out in a former chapter how under the influence of Christianity many benignant qualities of the old deities have passed down to the saints of the new order, who have taken over in some

[9] A somewhat analogous form of self-protection is to be found in Italy, where, on the eve of St. John's day, the night when witches are abroad, the holiday-makers carry about an onion-flower or a red carnation, the idea being that if this be handed to the witch there will be time to escape while she is counting the leaves.

[1] Kamporoglou, Hist. Ath., vol. i. p. 231.

[2] There are several variations of the song of the Kalikantsari. The version quoted here is from an article by M. Politis in the "Pandora," vol. xvi. p. 454.

cases the attributes, in others the shrines, and even the festivals of their predecessors. Similarly, the malignant forces of the ancient nature-worship live on, and if they are ever reasoned upon by those among whom they survive, it is only to set them down as the manifestations or the ministers of the evil one whose name is Legion. The devil is thus to them both one and many, and is here a very real and awe-inspiring fact, not to be named save indirectly, or under some euphemistic title, such as ὁ πλανήτης, "the wanderer"; ὁ ἀμελέτητος, "the unmentionable"; ὁ μαῦρος, "the black one"; ὁ καλὸς ἄνθρωπος, "the good man"; or even, as in Rhodes and elsewhere, ὁ ἐξ ἀπὸ 'δῶ, which may be interpreted, "the get thee behind me!"[3]

Sometimes he is manifested to the eye of sense in the form of an animal, a black horse or a black ass. The Mainotes, in whose land is the famous cave of Taenaron, the "Taenarii fauces," preserve the tradition of a black dog, that issues from its recesses, and runs about the earth—an unconscious reminiscence perhaps of Cerberus. More commonly it is the form of a goat which the demoniac power assumes; and in Maina, again, there is a folk-song which tells how one who was on his way to avenge an insult by shooting his enemy evoked the devil's aid, addressing a goat which he hears bleating by the name of Satan:—

| | |
|---|---|
| Στὸ δρόμο ποῦ ἐπήγανε | Upon the way he went |
| Ἕνας βέτουλας ἐβέλαξε | A goat bleated; |
| Ἔλα κοντά μου, Σατανᾶ, | "Come to my side, Satan," said he, |
| Γιὰ να τελειῶσω τὴ δουλειά.[4] | "That I may do what I have to do." |

[3] Literally "out from here," from this a single word is formed, ὁ ὄξαποδος.

[4] There are several versions of this passage in this well-known murder-song. The above is, however, as I took it down from my guide in Maina, who knew it by heart.

The shepherds of Parnassus, who live all their lives in the open air on the mountain side, keenly sensitive to those impressions which affect all simple people who live face to face with nature at her wildest and ruggedest, bear testimony to the apparition of a monstrous he-goat among their flocks in the rutting season. Again, in many parts of Greece there is great fear of the half-human, half-animal *κουτσοδαίμονος*, or "limping demon," a creature of hideous exterior, with the legs of a goat, with a hairy face, a long bearded chin, and a horned head that butts with terrible effect. He generally appears in company with the Kalikantsari, but from his lameness lags behind, and he is the most dreaded, the most relentless and terrible of all the emanations of the evil spirit with which Greek superstition is familiar, combining the grosser characteristics of Hephaestus and Pan with the typical representations of the devil in early ecclesiastical art. The dragons already alluded to are to the popular mind another form of this manifestation of the diabolic nature.

Other attributes of the devil, the manner and motives of his appearance, and the methods by which he may be exorcised, are less individual in character and more or less analogous to the traditions of the illiterate in other lands.

Enough has perhaps now been said to present a general idea of the prevailing tendency of the popular mind in Greece. With increased facilities of communication and the extension of primary education these ideas will doubtless gradually lose the strong hold they still maintain in remoter districts, and disappear as the popular muse is gradually disappearing. But it is to be

hoped that before it is too late the work of collection and classification may be carried out more thoroughly than it has been, and a valuable chapter added to the history of natural development. There is probably no accessible portion of the world where a greater wealth of popular lore and fancy is scattered abroad, and though much is being done to record these valuable traditions, there still remains much to do.

In conclusion, we may turn back to the question which was suggested at the outset, and fairly ask whether enough has not been adduced to prove that, in spite of all the vicissitudes through which this land has passed, the olden spirit is still the same, the spirit manifested not so much in the classic masterpieces produced under exceptional circumstances and at a particular time, but rather in glimpses of the more intimate life revealed to us in the simpler epic or the homelier lyrics of the anthology, and that a people which has retained through inevitable transformations so much that is directly traceable to the Hellenic fountainhead, must therefore be looked upon as the genuine representatives of those whose language they still speak and whose name they still assume.

# CHAPTER VIII.

## THE POPULAR POETRY.

THE mother of the arts still lives, like Niobe, only with the memory of her dead children. When the West re-awoke from the darkness of the middle ages, when the lowering cloud of barbarian invasion had ceased to menace there, and the Italian townships in their reviving prosperity began to rival one another in the sumptuousness and decoration of their palaces and shrines, Greece enjoyed no such respite. The few individuals who, in the comparative security of the Eastern Court, or in the mountain hermitages of monasticism, still preserved the dying light of culture and of learning, gradually found their way to Italy and to the rising universities of the North, while perpetual invasions of successive nationalities confounded the speech and disturbed the traditions of this ill-fated land. Art and even industry disappeared, and if now, after half a century of security, the first symptoms of a revival are anxiously awaited, it must yet be very long before it can arrive at any maturity, for the taste and the demand have first to be created; and until material development has duly paved the way, it would be unreasonable to look for spiritual or moral advancement. And yet, as we have seen, there is abundant evidence that the temperament which produced the highest poetic and artistic ideal which the world has known did not entirely die, and that the vital qualities

of this extraordinary people have survived and even imposed themselves upon the new populations in sufficient measure to give hopes for the future. It has often been pointed out by the historians of the war of independence that the Greek peasantry are the salt of the nation; that in spite of the endless intrigues and self-seeking which characterized the conduct of so many of the leaders, it was the consistent patriotism and devotion of the peasantry which enabled the struggle to be prolonged, and which finally brought about the reconstitution of the Greeks as a nation. And once more, it is the peasantry, the people in a limited sense, which, unconsciously no doubt, has never let the ideal go. When the groves of Academy lay desolate, when the slopes of Parnassus were abandoned to the Wallach nomad, when the hill of the Museion was covered with batteries which played upon the masterpieces of their votaries, the banished muses took refuge in the cottage and the mountain fastness, and the voice of the people became instinct with a form of poetic expression, which produced a wealth of unwritten song such as the popular poetry of few other lands can boast.

These songs, some of which have become almost universal throughout Greece, while others, especially those of the islands, have remained strictly local, are now in great measure guaranteed against the gradual oblivion to which the opening-up of the country, the new interests of political life, the spread of education, and the reading of the newspapers would inevitably have soon consigned them, by the patient efforts during the present century of four foreigners—the French

collectors, Fauriel, Marcellus, and Legrand; the German, Passow; and among Greek authors by Zampelios, Razelos, Sakellarios, and Michael Lelékos, who is still engaged in the arduous work of transcribing from the mouths of the people their songs, their folk-lore, their proverbs, and their stories. There must yet be much to do in this respect; the Hellenic populations scattered over the Turkish empire doubtless possess a similar wealth of poetic expression which still remains to be collected, but there is now, at any rate, no fear that these songs, which apart from their intrinsic beauty are invaluable to the student of custom and myth, will ever be wholly lost in the day—one is tempted to hope somewhat remote—when the Greeks have gone the way of the Western nations.

The poems may be divided into two main divisions, according to their subject matter; those of which the spirit is epical, if the expression may be used in a rather loose sense, and those of which the spirit is purely lyrical. The first division will include all those poems which celebrate the heroes of the war of independence, the so-called Klephtic songs of somewhat older origin, the stories of Suli and the wars of Ali Pacha, the Cretan battle-songs, and generally all the records of famous Armatoli and chieftains. These, though not necessarily differing in form from the other division, may be fairly described as epic in spirit, and they were during the last century and the early part of this sung or recited, and for the most part composed or even improvised by the blind beggars, who went from village to village at the season of the annual Paneguris, accompanying themselves on the lyra or rustic viol,

and who constituted a class that would seem to have been the lineal descendants of the bards and rhapsodists of ancient days. In Spain to this day a similar custom prevails, where the blind men, who formerly were the chief exponents of the romances of the Cid, now find occupation in putting a rough narrative form on the latest crime or catastrophe which excites the public mind, and singing it about the streets to eager audiences. In the new Greece, alas! there will be few or none such found to-day, the resources of modern life have destroyed their occupation, and the free Greeks no longer need the ideals of an Androutzos, a Katzantónis, or a Boukováls. In Crete alone, in the mountains of Sphakia, may be found men who sing the old heroic sagas, and still in the remoter mountain valleys of Greece, a few old wives recite the Klephtic songs they heard in their youth; but these belonged especially to the time of struggle; the days of the Klephts, of the irregular mountain fighting, are over now, and in future these poems will only live recorded in the national literature. They have furnished the chief source of inspiration to the most characteristic and most national poet of modern Greece, Aristoteles Valaoritis, of Santa Maura, who adopting their language as well as their matter and form, and infusing it with the fire of true poetic genius, has sung the exploits of the mountaineers in a series of poems, which, were they not necessarily restricted to a small circle of readers, would have won for him the high place among European writers which he occupies in his own country.

The second division, which has been described as rather lyrical in character, will include those songs which record an incident of popular fable or super-

Woman of Eleusis

stition—the love-songs of the people, the songs which accompany various rites and solemnities, especially marriages, cradle and nursery songs, dancing songs, and finally the myrologies or elegies for the dead, improvised or sung for the most part by the women over the graves of the departed. Their various uses and occasions will be more fully described hereafter, as they occur; it is necessary, by way of introduction, to say a few words about the form and character which is common to Greek popular poetry generally.

In the first place, there is seldom any long sustained interest or effort; the poems are for the most part short, seldom exceeding thirty lines, dealing with one episode, and characterized by directness and spontaneity. They are without any particular structural grace, but certain definite frameworks are of constant recurrence, which are filled up according to the subject in hand, or perhaps the incident to be described is improvised within the limits of the given mould. In the Klephtic poems especially certain preludes consisting of two or three introductory lines occur frequently. such as, for instance—

> "The fields are athirst for water, the mountains long for snow,
> The falcons for their prey, and the Turks for Christian heads;"

or,

> "Three birds have alit on the heights of Monastir,
> One looks toward Jannina, another to Bitolia,
> And the third, the bonniest one, makes comment thus, and says"—

this with variations on the names, according to the subject, serves to introduce the episode—or, again,

> "What noise is this, what mighty tumult?
> Are they slaughtering oxen, or are wild beasts at battle?
> They are not slaughtering oxen, nor are wild beasts at battle;
> It is Boukováles fighting," &c.



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The terminations are often abrupt, and there is frequently an unaccountable inconsequence and generally an absence of art in these compositions, which does not detract from the natural poetry, however wanting they may be in dignity and reserve. Effect is obtained by well-balanced repetition, answer following question in almost identical words. They draw largely upon nature for their inspiration; mountains and animals, especially birds, are made to speak with a human voice, and they strike one as essentially products of the open air, and of the simple life. The *vis maligna* and the weird of natural forces, the separation from the sun and light involved in death, and the dread that all cannot be well away from the human companionship, the passionate love inspired by the mountains, the glory of youth and strength—all these are ever present.

The language is often very difficult, for popular songs are naturally affected by the dialects of the districts in which they are sung. Thus we frequently find the same song with many variations of the text to suit the speech of various provinces. Turkish words and even Italian occasionally occur, and the popular corruptions of the purer Greek are not easy to identify at first sight; the language, moreover, is very elliptical, and there is an entire absence of syntax, and yet this very simplicity, the directness of expression inherent in such unliterary compositions, constitutes one of the especial charms of the people's poetry.

The large majority of these songs, and nearly all the Klephtic poems, are written in a swinging metre of fifteen syllables to the line, which is divided by a strict cæsura in two hemistiches, the first of eight, and the

second of seven syllables. The prosody is purely accentual. Sometimes the couplets rhyme and sometimes they do not, while occasionally a poem in which blank verse has prevailed throughout, concludes with a rhyming couplet. The metre is practically the same as that of our own ballad poetry, where the two hemistiches are written as two lines, the second having sometimes six and sometimes seven syllables. Such was already the metre of the political verses written at Constantinople in the 11th century, and such, with the addition of rhyme, continued to be the form of heroic verse ever after. In this metre also, and without rhyme, is the Chronicle of the Wars of the Franks in the Morea, a long and tedious composition, devoid of poetical merit, composed early in the 14th century. Rhyme was probably introduced by the Italians, the Genoese at Constantinople, and the Venetians in Crete and elsewhere, and there is a class of Romaic poetry which shows deliberate imitation of the Italian romance. Such a poem is the "Erotocritus" of Vincenzo Cornaro, a Cretan of Venetian extraction, which was written about 300 years ago. The following couplets from this poem will serve as a specimen of the rhyming fifteen-syllable metre:—

Μὰ τ' ἄστηρ, μὰ τὸν οὐρανὸν, μ' ἀνατολὴ καὶ δύσι,
Καὶ μὰ τὴν γὴν, ποῦ τὰ κορμιὰ θὲ νὰ μᾶς καταλύσει,
Καὶ μὰ τὸν ἥλιον τὸν ζεστὸν, μὰ φέγγος, μὰ σελὴνη,
Ποτὲ νὰ μὴ δολώσωμεν ἐτοῦτο ὁποῦ ἐγίνη.[1]

[1] It must be remembered in reading the above, that the pronunciation is according to accent, and not according to quantity, as laid down by prosody.

Of the unrhymed verse, the following little Klephtic song will give an adequate idea :—

Χορεύουν τὰ κλεφτόπουλα, γλεντᾶνε τὰ καϋμένα,
κ' ἕνα μικρὸ κλεφτόπουλο δὲν παίζει, δὲ χορεύει,
μὸν τἄρματα συγὺραγε καὶ τὸ σπαθὶ τροχάει.
τουφέκι μου περήφανο, σπαθί μου παινεμένο,
πολλὲς φορὲς μ' ἐγλύτωσες κὴ ἀκόμα τούτην ὥρα·
τότε θὰ πάω 's τὰ σμαλτιᾶ, θὰ πάωνὰ σᾶς σμαλτώσω.

Besides this form, there are a number of graceful lyric metres, the language is plastic, and lends itself to metrical variety. Not to multiply examples indefinitely, the following extracts, which, like the preceding poem, are quoted from the "Epidorpion": of Lelékos, will serve to give some idea of the lyrical capacity of the language :—

Στάσου, κόρη, μὴ σπουδάζης
τὸν καίρο μὴ λογαριάζης,
κὴ ὁ καιρὸς θέλει σοῦ φέρει
δαχτυλίδι μέσ' 's τὸ χέρι,
δαχτυλίδι κὴ ἀρρεβῶνα
καὶ 's τὴν κεφαλὴ κορώνα.

* * *

Θέλω ν' ἀρχινήσω,
φῶς μου, νὰ θρηνήσω
καὶ διηγηθῶ
τὴ θαυμαστὴ ἀνδρεία,
Ἑλλήνων ἐκστρατεία.

* * *

Κ' ηὗρα πεθερὰ
σὰν τὴν τρανταφυλληὰ,
κ' ηὗρα πεθερὸ
σὰν τὸ βασιλικὸ,
κὴ ἀντραδέρφια δυὸ
σὰν τὸν ἀμάραθο.
Μὰ τὸ μικρότερο,
τὸ διαβολότερο,
κεῖνο μοῦ 'λεγε, κεῖνο μ' ἀουήνευε.

A special feature in the popular poetry are the distiches or rhyming couplets with fifteen syllables to the line, of which a large number have been collected. These frequently combine a very poetic thought with particular felicity of expression, and may be compared to the *stornelli* of modern Italy. The following couplet will serve as an example :—

> Ὅταν σὲ βλέπω κ' ἔρχεσαι μὲ τᾶλλα παλληκάρια,
> 'εσ' εἶσαι τὸ γαρύφαλο καὶ τᾶλλα τὰ κλωνάρια.

The date of many of these poems cannot be fixed with any approximation to truth. The evidence of Anna Comnena in the 11th century proves the existence of a folk-poetry in which current events were celebrated, and quotations in her biography of the Emperor Alexis show the vulgar language of that time to have been somewhat analogous to the modern idiom. But to go back further still, the song of Hybrias the Cretan, the song of Harmodius and Aristogiton, and the swallow-song of the Rhodian boys are testimony of the existence of a form of folk-poetry among the ancient Greeks; while the pastorals of Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus are only idealizations of the ruder measures which the unlettered herdsmen improvised to beguile a summer day.

The Klephtic songs, which record the exploits of some well-known warrior, and the poems which deal with the incidents of the war of independence are, of course, easily relegated to a given period, and the majority of the former fall within the latter half of the last century. Others, again, must be a great deal older, and where we find a poem like that of "Charos and the Youth," translated on p. 281, existing in northern Greece, and

a textually different but materially similar composition in Crete, the assumption of considerable antiquity is warranted. Such a poem, again, as the "Bridge of Arta" (p. 278), which occurs in several variations, deals with an episode which is the outcome of a very ancient superstition, probably closely connected with the stoicheiolatry described in an earlier chapter.[2] Emile Legrand has published in his collection a number of Greek songs which are, at any rate, not later in date than the 15th century, for they are preserved in a certain theological manuscript codex, sent to Vienna in the middle of the 16th century by Augier Busbecq, Austrian ambassador to the Porte, who occupied himself in collecting for the Vienna Library such manuscripts as had escaped destruction at the fall of Constantinople. There are no heroics, no martial songs among them, no trace of idealism; they are nearly all erotic, or, at any rate, sensuous in character. Some of these have served again in modified forms, or rather portions of them are found in other love songs more recently recorded, and the language does not differ sufficiently from that of the great mass of popular poetry to indicate a much later date for the rest. On the other hand, the extreme *naïveté* and simplicity of idea expressed in the religious poems does not necessarily prove their antiquity, for the ignorance of the people in religious matters is still phenomenal, and was, if anything, probably rather less profound in the days when their religion was not practised without fear of persecution. The wedding songs and dancing songs are doubtless of great antiquity, and, generally speaking, the oldest of these popular

[2] Chap. vii., p. 169.

poems are probably those which accompany a ceremonial or celebrate an anniversary, and those which partake of the nature of our nursery rhymes. We must, however, be content to renounce any attempt to fix their date, except in the cases where it is clearly indicated by the subject.

As regards the Klephtic songs, Fauriel considers that a few may be traceable to the real actors in the scenes described, just as the beautiful myrology for his own death has been authentically traced to the lips of Thanasé Diakos, the young and self-devoted soldier-monk, who was taken alive and put to death after the latest battle of Thermopylæ.

> Γιὰ ἴδὲς καιρὸ ποῦ ἐδιάλεξεν ὁ Χάρος νὰ μὲ πάρῃ
> Τώρα ποῦ ἀνθίζουν τὰ κλαριὰ, ποῦ βγάν' ἡ γῆ χορτάρι.

"Behold and see what time has Charos chosen to call me hence,
Now when the branches are in bloom and the earth grows green again."

But he attributes the composition of the majority to the blind rhapsodists above alluded to. The authorship of the love-songs is lost for ever, the wealth of such creation was too great for it to attract any particular attention, and many an Anacreon of the islands sleeps, inglorious though not mute. Fauriel also remarks that during his sojourn at Jannina in the beginning of the century it was especially the tanners who appeared to have the song-making faculty, while in the country it was the shepherds who most often heard them, that loved to sing how the partridges were calling on the mountain. As has been already pointed out, the myrologies or dirges for the dead are often improvised by the women, and thus forgotten as soon as sung. It is,

therefore, difficult to obtain genuine specimens of such compositions.

Where there is a musical accompaniment to the voice, it is furnished either by a small pear-shaped fiddle with three strings, held upright upon the knee and played with a bow, or by the lyra, a kind of rustic mandoline with five wire strings. The airs are minor and melancholy, and to our ears often unmusical, as also is the droning nasal singing in which the people seem to take so much pleasure. The character of the music generally is Oriental, and appears to be a legacy from the Turkish domination; at any rate, there is little in common between the singing with which travellers in Greece are familiar, and the merry tunes which I have heard shepherd boys piping in Ætolia on the reed-pipe cut from the fen, and which, in that isolated mountain-land, are perhaps as ancient as the form of the instrument itself.

The popular songs of Greece have an exceptional value as illustrating contemporary manners, and from the fact that they have preserved reminiscences of ancient customs and superstitions, while the Klephtic poems stand for the evidence of the ideal, behind and above all the brutality and bloodshed which characterized an era of resistance and revolution. For the Klephts and the corsairs were the protest of liberty against the tyranny of a foreign domination, and the poems in which they are glorified, in which their exploits are recorded with a fierce pride of approval, while all the darker side is passed over with sympathetic indulgence, are the voice of the humbler people, who were loyal to their country's cause through a long period of struggle, and who have painted their heroes not wholly as they

were, but as they wanted them to be. The nobilities which we might question were intensely real to them, and the pathos of their sympathy is no less genuine for the partiality of their judgment. A passion of national hatred had blunted the natural feelings and established a standard of virtues which were crimes, but side by side with these, an ardent love of personal liberty, a loyalty of comradeship, a stoic indifference to hardship, pain, and death, still made appeal to the highest instincts of mankind; and now that the long lapse of time has severed us from the actual horrors of a century of blood and rapine, it is this aspect which these poems have preserved to us, the witness of an ideal that never was abandoned, the roses on the tomb.

In attempting to give some idea of these productions of the popular muse, I have refrained, as a rule, from any attempt at metrical translation, giving merely as literal a rendering as is consistent with the different idiom of the two languages, for the transformation into English verse would inevitably entail the loss of that spontaneity and simplicity which is their especial charm, and would convey a false impression of their unlettered art. The student of modern Greek can read them in the various collections referred to, and as it is chiefly the matter with which we are here concerned, I have not thought it necessary to place the text beside the translation.

# CHAPTER IX.

## THE KLEPHTS AND KLEPHTIC SONGS.

THE word *Klepht*, of course, signifies robber, but the famous Klephts of the 18th century in Greece had nothing in common with the ordinary bandit, and they have become as firmly established as popular heroes as our own Robin Hood and William of Cloudesley, and all the other outlaws of ballad poetry. A number of commonplace brigands were subsequently included in the category of Klephts; and many, no doubt, of those that have become popular heroes had a questionable right to this distinction; while the latter-day kings of the mountain brought the name into deep discredit; the looseness, therefore, with which this name has been applied, must excuse the length of the following investigation. Moreover, considerable obscurity shrouds the first institution of those armed bands of outlaws who at the end of the last century made the name of Klepht famous. Their history, like that of the *Armatoli*, is yet to be written. Apart from such scanty records as are available, and the popular songs in which they are celebrated, there is, perhaps, something still to be gleaned from oral tradition, and it is not impossible that the monasteries of Thrace, Macedonia, and Epirus may furnish interesting details to the patient investigator.

The first historical glimpse obtainable of such armed bands takes us back to the period immediately succeeding the Turkish conquest of Constantinople, and the

final extinction of the Byzantine Empire. Among the most distinguished of the Greek exiles who were endeavouring to secure the sympathies of Rome and Europe for a new crusade against the Ottoman advance, were Theodore, Bishop of Ephesus, and Nicephorus, Bishop of Heraclea, one of the most eminent of those Orthodox ecclesiastics who had accepted the proposed union with the Roman Church at the Council of Florence in 1438, a step which he, however, soon afterwards retracted. When at the death of Pius II. (Æneas Sylvius) all prospects of the new crusade were at an end, Nicephorus returned to the East to expiate what he considered to be his crime, and spent many years preaching an unsectarian gospel to Christians of either communion in the pestilential prisons and galleys of Constantinople, to die at last as a martyr, having his limbs broken one by one with an iron mallet. His former antagonist and subsequent coadjutor in the cause of the Greeks, Theodore, Bishop of Ephesus, a man of high spirit and unbroken resolution, disdaining tamely to submit to the force of circumstances, left Italy for Epirus, where he landed with no earthly goods beyond his crozier and his Bible. It is recorded that he found among her least accessible mountains a wild shepherd race who had preserved the national traditions free from all barbarian influence, and had never even submitted to the Byzantine emperors. Now surrounded by the hated Turks, who were gradually establishing their dominion over the whole Balkan peninsula, their days were passed in continual guerilla warfare with the invaders. Their villages had all been burned, and they made their moving camp in caverns or rude shelters

built from day to day, and there on the mountain tops, under the roof of heaven, they preserved the tradition of liberty, and defended it with heroic fortitude. These men, Christians in the midst of the advancing tide of Islamism, received the Bishop with joy, and he found a mission and a work to do through the remaining years of his life among these early Klephts, of whom we have through him some scanty knowledge.

It is said that he succeeded in softening the rugged manners of these mountaineers; that under his influence, their treatment of the weak became more generous, their attitude towards women more reverent; and while he never ceased to prophesy the ultimate regeneration of Greece, the recovery of Constantinople, and spread through the mountain fastnesses of Epirus and Thessaly that ideal which never wholly died, he taught them first the watchward, *Χρίστος ἀνέστη*, "Christ has risen," the Easter greeting, which was ever on the lips of those who fought for liberty, down to the days of the last and final uprising. A letter of Theodore to Lascaris, the saviour of learning, is preserved, in which he writes, "Endeavour to rouse your polished nations (to the cause), I am firing the hearts of our barbarians." When at last he died, they hollowed his grave among the rocks which had sheltered him, and there was great sorrow as the mournful tidings spread from summit to summit, along the range of Pindus, and eastward to old Olympus, and men came from far to beg for a scrap of his garments, or a leaf from his well-worn Gospel, which were treasured and revered like the relics of a saint.[1]

[1] Villemain, "Lascaris."

Thus we see that already in the 15th century the mountains of Pindus were occupied by bands of outlaws, who lived by plunder, and who resisted with success the advance of a foreign domination. But whether these men were merely a race of shepherds, who clung with desperate tenacity to independence, or were composed, at any rate in part, of the old local militia, which in the latter days of the Byzantine Empire had to some extent protected the native population against Franks and Servians, and now, from fear of being disbanded, had taken to the mountains, it would be hard to say.

Armed bands of Greeks or Christian Albanians reappear in recorded history at the close of the 17th century, fighting a gallant fight in northern Greece, while Venice was driving the Turks from the Morea under the victorious Morosini, when for a while it seemed as though the dominion of the Crescent was on the wane. The Bishop Philotheus in the Parnassus range, the chieftains Kourmas in Doris, Soumilas, Vlakhos and Christos Valaoritis in western Greece were the heroes of a desperate struggle, which was prolonged for a space of thirty years (1684-1715).

But it is to the beginning of the 18th century that the few authentic traditions which exist about the Klephts must be ascribed. This was the age of the oldest heroes of popular song, Boukováles and Christos Milionis, whose name has survived in the familiar long gun of the mountaineer (Milióni).

It was the policy of the Ottoman invaders to endeavour to secure by special privileges the allegiance of the armed bands which held out in the mountains, long after the Turkish domination had been established in the

plain, and to enrol those of them whose adherence they could secure in the local militia ; and many writers have ascribed the institution of the so-called Armatolik militia to the Turkish conquerors, but it appears to be more probable that the invaders found the institution already developed by the Byzantine emperors, and adopted it, being themselves few in number, and unable to keep head against the mountain bands which remained defiant without the assistance of the Armatoli. Byzantine historians mention a soldier cast, known by the name of ἀπελάτης, or "outlawed," with a distinction of outlaws of the mountain and outlaws of the coast, which may perhaps have corresponded to the distinction of "wild Klephts" and "subject Klephts" found in Thessaly under the Turkish domination.

The greater part of the Greek and semi-Greek populations submitted without a struggle to the Ottoman occupation, but the mountaineers of Olympus and Pelion, of Pindus and Agrapha maintained an armed resistance to the victors. From their mountain strongholds they made constant descents to the plain to pillage the invaders there established, and sometimes also those of the natives who had tamely submitted ; nor did they spare those monasteries which had made terms and secured privileges from the new masters. According to the popular tradition, these men first received the appellation of Klephts.

As time went on, the conquering Turks wearied of the perpetual desultory war resulting from this state of things, and offered easy terms to such of the mountain clans as would accept them. In return for a small tribute, they suffered them to govern themselves according

to their own laws, and maintain a state of semi-independence in their mountains, carrying arms for their own defence. A certain number of these clansmen, however, refused all manner of terms, and continued to defy the invaders throughout the Turkish occupation. The others established a kind of militia, for the vindication and defence of the rights accorded them; and while on the one hand they formed a barrier against the encroachments of the Pachas, they were also made use of by the latter for protection against the irreconcilable Klephts. The Armatoli—for by this name the irregular militia was known—and the Klephts were thus thrown into antagonism, but their antagonism was more apparent than real. The Armatole recognized the Klepht as his kinsman, and was often upon the best of terms with him; while the Turk, to whom he owed allegiance, was his natural enemy. If he quarrelled with his masters, he fled at once to the mountains, and thus sometimes whole companies would desert together, and resume the title of Klepht, which soon grew to be an honourable distinction. When once such a band had taken to the mountains, there was no difficulty in finding recruits among the vanquished but resentful population.

The history of the Armatoli is still to be written, and of their constitution but little has been recorded as yet. The Ottoman government is said originally to have recognized fourteen Armatoliks; at another time it would appear as if only seven Capitanliks had existed in northern Greece. The institution was never introduced into the Peloponnese. The captain of each body was known as the Protaton or Armatolik, and these posts were generally hereditary in certain families. The

soldiers were known as Pallikars, and the lieutenant or second in command as the Protopallikar. They wore the Albanian dress, and were indeed very many of them of the Albanian race. For the Christian Albanians gradually identified themselves with the Greeks, and under the Turkish occupation, as at the time of the final uprising against it, race feeling was of less importance than the association of creeds.

The Armatoli were at first entrusted with the care of the highways, but as they became more formidable, a new Ottoman functionary was appointed, under the title of *Dervenipacha*, or "Warden of the Passes," having under his orders a second militia composed of the rival element and very largely of Mussulman Albanians, commanded by captains known as *Derveniagas.* After the peace of Belgrade in 1739, the Sultan initiated the policy of curtailing the numbers, and diminishing the powers of the Christian Armatoli, taking advantage of the feuds between the captains to supplant them with Mussulman Albanians. In 1787 the famous Ali of Tepelen filled the office of Dervenipacha, and carried out this policy with remarkable success, reducing the influence of the Armatoli to a mere shadow, and even encouraging the Klephts, in order to provide an excuse for introducing more Mussulman troops into the Armatoliks without actually abrogating their charters. With the decline of the Armatoli the importance of the Klephts increased, and the policy of Ali drove a great number of the former to the mountains, so that from this time forth the names are readily confused, in fact, it may be said that Ali ended by making all the Armatoli into Klephts, and the old distinction virtually passed away.

In spite of the large preponderance in numbers, the better arms and ample resources of his Albanians, they were not more than a match for the Klephts, and the difficulty of dealing with an enemy which never admitted itself to be beaten, induced Ali to adopt those treacherous methods which have made his name a byword. The battle was henceforth not for privileges, but for existence.

The Klephtic bands varied in numbers from fifty to two and three hundred. They had no fixed quarters, but there was generally some rendezvous, some station high up towards a mountain summit approached by an almost inaccessible gorge, where they would from time to time re-muster, where they concealed their plunder and their ammunition. Such stations were known as *Limeria.* Limeri is a contraction of ὅλην ἡμέραν (all the day), for their forays and marches were generally made after darkness had fallen. On moonless and stormy nights they set out from the Limeri to pillage and destroy, sparing theoretically the property of their own countrymen, though the principle was by no means always adhered to in practice, and frequently carrying off the Turkish Beys and Agas, whom they retained in captivity till a ransom was forthcoming; and while they did not spare the monks and bishops who had made peace with the invader, they showed the utmost veneration for churches and relics, and were never known to have abandoned their religion even to save their lives.[2]

[2] Their attitude towards the Church is illustrated by the saying of Lord Byron's Greek guide quoted in one of his letters: "Our religion is good, but our priests are all thieves." This was, however, overstated, for some of the most disinterested leaders in the national movement were drawn from the ranks of the Church.

With regard to distinctive treatment in favour of their own countrymen on

They knew every gorge and angle of the mountains, over which they moved with extraordinary rapidity, being thus enabled frequently to defeat bodies vastly superior in numbers by drawing them on into a trap, from which there was no exit, and then shooting them down from posts of vantage. Their spare time in the Limeri was spent in practising their aim, and in gymnastic exercises, consequently they wasted but little powder, firing from their concealment, behind boulders of rock, or any available shelter, and fighting each man for himself, without definite plan or tactics. They are even said to have developed a skill and a rapidity of eye, which enabled them at night to aim at the flash of their enemy's gun with deadly success. At night they lay on the ground by the torrent bed with their arms, their ammunition, and the bread they eat, rolled up in pitched canvas. They were indifferent to hunger, thirst, and want of sleep, and their capacity for physical endurance, through running fights which lasted for two and three days together, was extraordinary. The spirit of comradeship, and of personal devotion to one another, was exemplary; and not less remarkable was their firmness in capture and courage under the torture. To fall into the Pacha's hands was their especial dread, or to be mutilated after death by their enemies, and instances are quoted where in direst

the part of the Klephts, Colonel Leake, on the authority of the Bishop of Jannina, tells a curious story of the men of Khormova, whose operations were mostly in the Pass of Tepelen, near the site of the ancient oracle at Dodona. They used to place a priest in a hollow oak, and bring their prisoners to the tree for judgment. If he were a Mussulman, the voice from the tree ordered him to be stripped and hung. If a Christian, his life was spared, but he was generally stripped of all that he had.

need a comrade would decapitate the fallen Klepht, that the head might not be carried off in evidence of triumph. Death in the field was the best end they could anticipate, and though towards women of all denominations they showed a marked respect, with Mussulmans they neither gave nor accepted quarter.

In the winter many of these bands were obliged to disperse, when snow rendered the higher ranges uninhabitable, and conceal themselves among the peaceful populations, hiding their weapons away in caves. Many of them passed over regularly to the Ionian Islands, where under the rule of Venice they were secure from the reach of their enemies.

Their affection for the mountains, where they lived in perpetual communion with nature, became a passion, and those who had once taken to the nomad life of the marauder became unfitted for any other. It is not strange that the sympathies of the down-trodden people were with them, in spite of the personal losses entailed by their raids, and that in a country with great traditions, but hopeless of deliverance, these men who kept alive the flame of liberty became the national heroes—the subjects of a thousand songs. Among the Klephts of latter days were doubtless plenty of Mussulman renegades, and many were more powerfully inspired by the hope of plunder than the sentiment of patriotism, but the popular songs are evidence that the latter feeling was keenly present, and that the better ideal behind the actual was never quite forgotten.[3]

[3] Finlay, whose personal bitterness leads him into several contradictions, and often blinds him to all save the faults of the Greeks, has contended in his history that the folk-poetry of the Greeks was neither national nor

If the authorship of the Klephtic poems is for the most part to be attributed to the blind beggars who in times gone by frequented the village fairs, their naïve and artless spontaneity is accounted for by the fact that they were composed by men who could neither read nor write, and had no literary knowledge. There is, however, one poet of the people, whose name is preserved, together with a considerable number of rhymes. Panaghiotes Tsopanakos, the dwarf of Dimitzana in Arkadia, was born at the close of the last century, and grew up amidst the stirring scenes of the Greek revolution. Being prevented by the infirmity of his body from taking an active part in the struggle, like Tyrtaeus of old he inspired his countrymen with martial songs, and was the *protégé* of the well-known Captain Niketaras. He died in 1825, at the age of thirty-six.

The eight poems, of which the renderings follow, are all of general import, and explain themselves. The first is among the most famous in Greece. The translation is from the text of Fauriel, who considers it to be among the oldest; Passow has two slightly different versions.

### MOUNT OLYMPUS.

Olympus and Kissavos, the two mountains, were at strife,
Thereon Olympus turned and cried to Kissavos:
"Revile me not, O Kissavos, trampled by Turkish feet![4]
I am the old Olympus, in all the world renowed;

influential. The mere fact of the existence of such poetry at all does not strike him as remarkable. His opinion is, however, not supported by the testimony of other and less biassed foreign historians of modern Greece.

[4] The word here is κονιαροπατημένε: the Turks in Macedonia and Thessaly were called by the Greeks Κονιάριδες, or Iconians, a name which calls to mind the most ancient capital of the Turkish power in Asia Minor. In Passow's version the word is τουρκοπατημένε.

I have two and forty summits and two and sixty springs—
For each spring I have a banner, for every branch a Klepht ;
Upon my highest summit an eagle is alit,
And in her talons she holds a hero's head.
'O head, what hast thou done to be entreated so?'—
'Feed on, O bird, upon my youth, and feast upon my manhood,
Thy wing will grow a cubit long, and thy talon to a span.
I was a Armatole in Louros and Xeroméros, [5]
And twelve years through a Klepht on Khasia and Olympus :
I have killed sixty Agas, and I have burned their villages,
And for the rest, Turks and Albanians, that I have left laid low,
They are many in number, bird, and never have been counted ;
And then to me my turn came too to perish in the fight.'"

## THE KLEPHT'S PARTING. [6]

The mother plied her weeding, her son was at her side,
And all the while she counselled him, and all the while she taught :
"My son, despise not wisdom, if thou wouldst make thy way."
And thus her son made answer, and thus her son replied :
"I have told thee, O my mother, I can serve no Turk as slave,
I cannot and I know not how, my heart here gathers moss.
I will shoulder my rifle, get hence and turn a Klepht,
Will dwell among the mountains, and on the lofty ridges ;
Grow familiar with the gorges, and have converse with wild beasts,
Will have the snows for cover, the rugged rocks for bed,
Will make my winter station the Limeri of the Klephts.
I go, my mother ; do not weep, but only bid me speed,
And pray, my little mother, that I may slay many a Turk ;
And do thou plant a rose-tree, and plant a dark carnation,
And water them with sugar, and water them with musk.
So long they blossom, mother, so long they put forth flowers,
This son of thine will not be dead, but meet the Turks in battle
But if the day of sorrow, the bitter day should come,

[5] The ancient Acarnania.

[6] Λελέκος.

If the two trees fade together, and if their flowers fall,
Then I too shall be smitten, and thou shalt wear the black."
Twelve years went by, and fifteen months went after,
Through which the rose-tree flourished, and ever new buds bloomed,
Till on one morning of the spring, upon a first of May,
When all the birds are singing and heaven is full of smiles,
There came a sudden lightning flash, thunder and darkness followed;
The carnation groaned aloud, and the rose-tree shed tears;
In a moment both were withered, and all the flowers dropped;
And, with the flowers, lifeless his wretched mother fell.

## THE SONG OF THE DREAM OF DIMOS.[7]

Did I not tell thee, Dimos? Did I not say it three times and five?
Humble the pride of thy turban, and cover thy martial trappings,[8]
Lest the Albanians get sight of thee, mark thee down and slay thee,
For all this silver's sake, and for thou art so proud.
The cuckoos call on the mountains, the partridges on the mountain flanks,
And there's a little bird discoursing over the head of Dimos.
But her voice is not a bird's voice, nor the voice of any swallow,
It is a little human voice she speaks with:
"Why are you so pale, O Dimos, and why look you so forlorn?"[9]
"Little bird, since thou inquirest, I will tell thee—
I had turned back to rest awhile, to take a spell of slumber,
And I saw in my slumber, the slumber I lay deep in,
I saw the heaven troubled, and all the stars blood-red,
And my Damascus sword blade was also dyed with blood."

[7] Fauriel.

[8] "Trappings" = *τσαπράζια*, silver ornaments worn on the cloth gaiters or greaves as protection to the knee.

[9] "Forlorn" = *ἀραχνιασμένος*, a very picturesque word, and characteristic of the popular muse, which means literally covered with spiders' webs, hence neglected, forlorn.

## THE SICK KLEPHT.[1]

We were forty Klephts together, forty brave Pallikars —
We had good bread for food, and tender goats' flesh,
We drank good wine . . . .[2]
And we made oath upon the cross, and by the Gospel,
If one fell sick amongst us, that we would not desert him ;
And the bravest of us all fell sick, the worthiest Pallikar :—
For forty days they carried him, forty days and nights together ;
But his shoulders withered, he could hold his arms no longer.
. . . . and one said to the other :[3]
"Brothers, shall we deny him ; brothers, shall we forsake him ?"
But he perceived their thoughts, he knew what they were saying.
"Brothers, do not forsake me ; do not deny me, brothers ;
But bear me on the mountain, and right up to the summit,
Cut branches, lay me down there, cut myrtles, stretch me on them,
Then turn my face towards the ground, that I may not see you pass.
And do not tell my mother the manner of my death,
But tell her, tell my mother, that I have taken service,
Against the Barbary folk, the Turkish fleet, enlisted,
And that I died in battle, sword in hand."

## THE KLEPHT'S FAREWELL.[4]

"Go down to the shore beneath, down there to the seashore,
And let thy hands serve thee for oars, thy chest for a rudder,
And thy nimble body let it be thy boat !
If God and the Virgin aid thee to swim, to reach the other side,
To arrive at our Limeri, where we were used to take counsel,
Where one day we roasted the two goats, Floras and Tombras,
If there any of our comrades should question thee about me,
Then say not I have perished, am dead with my evil star,
Say only that I have married in a lonely foreign land ;
That I have taken the flat stone to be my mother-in-law,
The side-stones for my brothers-in-law, and the black earth for wife."

[1] Legrand.

[2] [3] The rest of these two lines is wanting in the text.

[4] Fauriel.

## THE TOMB OF THE KLEPHT.[5]

The sun was setting, and Dimos gave command :
"My sons, go and fetch water, water for your evening meal ;
And thou, my nephew Lamprákis, sit down there by my side ;
Take these my arms and put them on, be captain in my place ;
And you, my children, take my sword, my sword that has no master,
Cut down green branches and make me a bed to lie on,
And bring me a holy monk that I may confess me,
That I may tell him all the sins I ever sinned.
I was thirty years an Armatole, and twenty years a Klepht,
And now the day of death has come, and I am about to die.
Make my grave broad and build it lofty,
That I may stand erect to fight and load my gun beside me ;
And leave a window open on my right,
That the swallow may come there and bring me back the spring,
That nightingales may sing me in the merry month of May."

## THE GRAVE'S VOICE.[6]

We had drunk all Saturday, and Sunday all day long,
And on the Monday morning our wine had all been drunk.
The captain sent me to go and fetch more wine.
A stranger in the country, I did not know my way;
So I went by devious paths, unfriendly narrow roads;
And these narrow roads led me to a high hillock,
And it was full of graves, and all of Pallikars :
But one of them was all alone, a way off from the rest ;
I saw it not, and stepped on it, and walked upon the head.
I heard a voice, a thunder, from the world where are the dead ;
"What ails thee, grave, to make complaint, to groan so loud and long ?
Does earth weigh heavy on thee, earth or the great black stone ?"

[5] Fauriel.

[6] The text is Fauriel's. Passow has also a version of this song, containing several additional lines dealing with the exploits of the buried Klepht, but the effect is stronger and more suggestive, terminating as in Fauriel's text.

"It is not that earth weighs heavy, nor yet the great black stone,
But sorrow and affront it is, and grief to me and pain,
That thou has dealt contemptuously with me, and walked upon my head.
Was not I once a young man too, was I not a Pallikar?
Did I not walk at night of old by the light of the moon?"

THE KLEPHT'S LIFE.[7]

Night is black upon the mountains,
Snow falls in the ravines,
Where ways are wild and gloomy,
Through rocks abrupt and gorges,
The Klepht unsheathes his sword.

And in his right hand naked
He bears the lightning flash,
The mountains are his palaces,
He has the sky for cover,
He has his gun for hope.

The pallid tyrants flee
Before his dreadful sword;
His bread is steeped with sweat,
He knows how to live with honour,
He knows too how to die.

In the world fraud has her way,
And injustice, so wills fate,
The wicked are the wealthy;
But here upon the mountains
Sequestered virtue dwells.

This fine poem is too long to quote in entirety. There follows a dramatic picture of the young Klepht bidding his mother farewell, and making his way to the mountains. A shot is fired, the battle opens, and they have killed the Klepht.

[7] Marcellus.

His comrades with uncovered head
March back with him lamenting,
And thus they sing together :
"The Klepht he lives unfettered,
The Kelpht unfettered dies."

One of the oldest of the Klephtic heroes celebrated in popular song was Janni Boukováles, who was Protopallikar in the band of Stathas, a chieftain of the Valtos and Agrapha. In 1767, at the head of three hundred Armatoli, he routed at Kerasovo the forces despatched against him by Kourt Pacha, under Mourto Khouso, the the grandfather of Ali of Tepelen. Later he fought under the Russian flag, and being wounded in a combat with the Turks at Eleusis, died at Salamis. His victory over the Bey of Tepelen is recorded in the following poem, of which several variants occur in the different collections :—

BOUKOVÁLAS.

What noise is this, what mighty tumult?
Are they slaughtering oxen, or are wild beasts at battle?
They are not slaughtering oxen, nor are wild beasts at battle;
Boukováles is fighting with fifteen hundred Turks.
The guns rattle like rain, the bullets fall like hail,
A fair girl calls from the window :
"Let the combat cease; O Janni, stay the firing!
The dust will drop, the mist will draw away,
And we will count thy band to see how many remain!"
The Turks have called the muster over three times—there are five hundred missing.
The sons of the Klephts call the muster—there are but three braves missing :
There's one has gone for water, and one has gone for bread,
The third, he was the bravest one, lies dead across his gun

Of sea-fights and corsair songs there are but few to hand, but the following poem which records the victory at Kassandra in 1772 of Janni Stathas, the son of the Stathas above referred to, may be placed appropriately after the song of Boukováles.

### JANNI STATHAS.[9]

A black ship was skirting the coast of Kassandra—
Black sails made shadow over her, and a flag blue as the sky:
A corvette comes to meet her with a red flag flying.
"Heave to!" she cries; and "furl the sails," says she;
"Heave to! not I; nor will I furl my sail;
Do you take me for a newly-married bride to do you reverence?[1]

My name is Janni Stathas, the son-in-law of Boukováles!
Let go the anchor, my brave lads, and face her with the prow;
Let the blood of the Moslem flow, spare not the unbelievers!"
The Turks tack round and come about;
Janni leaps on board the first, his sabre in his hand,
The blood runs down upon the ballast, and all the sea grows red,
And the infidels surrender, crying "Allah! Allah!"

Another member of the same group was known by the nickname of Ghiphtakis, or "little gipsy," he was killed in battle, fighting against Jousouf the "blood-drinker," a lieutenant of Ali Pacha of Tepelen.

### GHIPHTÀKIS.[2]

The fields are athirst for water, the mountains long for snow,
The falcons for little birds, and the Turks for (slaughtered) heads.
"What has become of the mother of Ghiphtakis,

[9] Fauriel.

[1] Alluding to the demure and modest attitude becoming a young bride. See p. 93.

[2] Fauriel.

She who aforetime lost her two sons, and her brother makes a third,
And who now goes wandering witless and laments?
She is seen no more in the lowlands, nor among the mountains."
"They say that she went by here, has gone to the shepherds' villages,
And the rattle of musketry was heard there, the terrible thunder.
It was not for a wedding or a village feast it thundered,
But Ghiphtakis was wounded in the hand and in the knee.
He staggered like a tree, and fell like a cypress,
He gave a mighty cry, brave Pallikar that he was:
'Where art thou, my good brother, my well-beloved?
Come back and take me up, or (at least) bear off my head,
That Jousouf Arab and his soldiers may not get it,
And bear it off to Jannina to Ali Pasha, the dog.'"

But more famous than any of these, most renowned of all Klephts, was Androutzos, father of the well-known Odysseus, and adoptive son of another veteran warrior Vlacho-thanási, whose myrology he thus sung:—

"They have killed five braves of mine, and Vlacho-thanási,
They have broken me five ribs and my right shoulder."

Androutzos, or Andríkos, whose real name was Andreas Verousis, was early named captain of the Armatoli in the province of Livadia, and was driven by the attempt to suppress this ancient institution to take to the mountains and become a Klepht. When in 1769 the Morea, relying on the co-operation of Russia, made an abortive attempt to rise against the Turkish domination, he threw himself into the movement. A Russian squadron under Alexis Orloff had appeared on the coast and disembarked six or seven hundred men, who occupied Navarino, whereas the Mainotes, who were to

act in concert, expected the support of six or seven thousand. The Russians were equally surprised to find the Greeks totally unprepared, and many of them even without arms. Androutzos with between two and three hundred men set out to join the rising; he crossed the Isthmus without opposition, and hastened to effect a union with the Greco-Russian force. But the latter had already dispersed; the Russians had re-embarked, the compromised Greeks were hiding in the mountains, or had sought a refuge on the Russian ships, while thousands of Turkish and Albanian troops were on the march to quell the rising. Androutzos had to retreat through the very midst of this army. He obtained a firman from the Pacha of Tripolitza, guaranteeing the safe return of his little band; but on reaching the Isthmus he fell in with a considerable number of the Turko-Albanian troops, who attacked him. He succeeded in repulsing their attack, but was unable to cut his way through the large body of the enemy which occupied the direct road home, and was therefore compelled to take a line due west along the southern shore of the Gulf of Corinth. The smallness of his band compelled them to remain perpetually on the alert, and their march was one continual running fight through the mountains, with little food and no sleep. The spirits of his followers began to flag, but the indomitable energy of Androutzos sustained them, and, arriving safely at Vostitza, they were enabled to take up a very strong position before the Turks attacked them in full force.

The battle lasted three days and nights without intermission, and the extraordinary vigour and training of the mountaineers enabled them to keep it up without

repose; at last, early on the morning of the fourth day, when the Turks thought their resources were quite exhausted, Androutzos issued from his lair and fell upon them. A desperate hand-to-hand fight ensued, and, incredible as it may appear, the Turks are said, in the panic, to have lost some 3,000 men; while of the little band of Klephts a fourth part were killed; the chief part of the enemy's stores and baggage fell into their hands. They had tasted no food for three days, and food was all that they took of the spoil; then entering Vostitza, they found some ships of Zante and Cephalonia, on board of which they embarked for Préveza, at that time under the protection of Venice.[3]

With the amnesty which accompanied the peace of Kainardji, he returned to Livadia and resumed the habits of the Klepht, fighting with the Suliotes against Ali Pacha; but after the peace of Jassi, the Suliotes retired into their mountains, whither the vengeance of Ali was not slow to follow them, and Androutzos, proscribed once more, took refuge again at Préveza. He determined to make a voyage to Russia, the power on which the patriots of Greece at this moment had concentrated all their hopes; but upon his landing at Cattaro, he was seized by the Venetian authorities, who were now coquetting with Turkey, and despatched in the first available Turkish ship to Constantinople. It is asserted that he was offered his liberty if he would become a Mussulman, but that he indignantly refused.

[3] Finlay, in his account of the Russian expedition under the two Orloffs and Admiral Elphinston, studiously avoids all mention of the gallant retreat of Androutzos, to which, however, other historians have done ample justice; among others, Villemain in his "Essai sur l'état des Grecs depuis la conquête Musulmane."

The mountain eagle's wings were clipped, but his spirit remained unbroken; and thus betrayed by Venice and abandoned by Russia, he languished in a Turkish prison until his death, which occurred about the beginning of the century.

Among the songs which celebrate his exploits, there is one most characteristic of the genius of Greek popular poetry, in which the mountains arraign the plains that have stolen their hero from them, when the chieftain had descended from his lair on some one of his expeditions. This song, however, will hardly bear translation, the spirit and the expression are too closely wedded; at its close, the summit of Liakoúra (Parnassus) cries:—

. . . . "Plain of pestilence, plain of desolation,
Didst thou think to deck thyself in my bravery?
Surrender this thy glory, and give me back my bravery,
Or I will melt my snows upon thee, and turn thee to a sea."

There is another fragment[4]:—

The mother of Andríkos is mourning, the mother of Andríkos weeps;
And oft she turns to the mountains, and arraigns them one and all:
"Wild mountains of Agrapha, crests of the mountains of Agrapha,
What have you done with my dear son, with Andríkos the captain?
Where can he be that all this summer has not seen him?
Neither Aspropotamos nor Karpenisi have heard of him:
My curse on you, ye elders; my curse on you, Black George!
It was you that sped my son away, the bravest of the brave.
O rivers, straighten in your beds, or let your streams run back,
And open the road for Andríkos to come again to Karpenisi."

[4] Fauriel.

Another favourite hero of the Klephtic songs, who also with Vláchavas and Astrapojannis has been since immortalized in the "Mnemosyna" of Valaoritis, was the intrepid and audacious Vlachiote, Katzantonis. The story of his death illustrates the capacity of endurance and the indifference to physical suffering manifested by these men of the mountains. Between 1805 and 1806 the principal Armatolik chieftains of the Pindus and Ætolia had assembled together at the summons of Count Jean Capodistria in Santa Maura, to concert a common plan of action for the furtherance of the idea which was then fermenting in the hearts of the Greeks and their sympathizers. Ali Pacha, who was at that time engaged in the suppression of the Armatoli, under the instructions of the Porte, assembled a numerous force in the Ambracian Gulf, and himself lay in wait for the conspiring chieftains at Préveza. An attack on the island was anticipated, and Katzantonis was appointed to the command of the irregular forces which had accompanied their chieftains to Santa Maura. He conceived the audacious plan of carrying the war into the enemy's quarters, and was on the point of crossing to the mainland when he was struck down by small-pox. As soon as he had partially recovered, he escaped from Santa Maura, and with his brother George made his way to Agrapha and the Thessalian border, intending there to muster forces and create a diversion on the mainland. After a few days spent in a monastery, fearing treachery, with cause, as the event proved, they retired to a cave in the mountains, where they were betrayed by the priest who supplied them with food. Sixty Albanians, under the redoutable Jousouf Arab, surrounded their refuge.

The Klephtic chieftain, who had had a relapse, was too weak to fight himself, but his brother George, bearing him on his shoulders, issued from the cavern after clearing a road with his rifle, and literally cut his way through their assailants, but was eventually overpowered in the open and made prisoner with his brother. All efforts to extort the names of the promoters of the movement were vain, and the two brothers were sentenced to have their limbs broken with a mallet. It is recorded that while the torture was being inflicted, Katzantonis was overheard crying to the Mussulmans who stood round him looking on, that they would not dare to stand so near if his legs were still unbroken. One of the best known Klephtic songs is the following short one recording the capture of Katzantonis :—

" Farewell, ye lofty mountains, and you cool springs, farewell !
And you Tsoumeria and Agrapha, the shelters of the Klepht ;
If ye should see my wife, and should ye see my son,
Then tell them how they took me by treachery and fraud :
They found me lying sick, unarmed upon my bed,
Like an infant in its cradle, bound fast in swaddling clothes.
You two must be my witnesses, and you must bear record
What hosts of Turks I fought against, and ever was victorious,
My gun called Panic, and my sword called Fear !" [5]

There is no lack of song from the popular muse celebrating the episodes and heroes of the final outbreak, but the genuine inspiration rather belongs to the older period, when the unselfconscious popular lyre was the only lyre of Greece. The later poems miss the spontaneous ring, the natural touch of the genuine Klephtic song. In other moods, the poetic achievement

[5] Λελέκος.

of Greece since the beginning of the century has been remarkable, since the latent force, revealed in a partial degree in these untutored efforts, has had free vent and play.

Meanwhile, in Greece itself the song of the Klepht is heard no more, the old sources of inspiration have ceased with the pulsations which kept them alive. Perhaps still in Sphakia, in the mountains of Crete, where a spirit akin to the old Klephtic protest still survives, such songs may yet be heard. A number dating from former periods of insurrection and ferment have been collected, but the Cretan muse is more diffuse, and they are most of them too long for quotation. There is, however, one savage little quatrain which is still remembered in Sphakia, and with it this chapter may fitly close :—

"When spring takes hold of earth again, and when the summer comes,
Then I will take my rifle, my silver-mounted pistols,
I will go down to Omalos, the highway of Mousouri,
I will make the mothers childless, and motherless the sons."

# CHAPTER X.

## THE SAGA OF SULI.

THE story of Suli occupies an important place in the folk-poetry of the early part of the century. Its fortunes became identified with those of Hellenism, and, when it fell, the scattered remnant of its people devoted their swords to the cause of Greece. The heroic struggle of the little commonwealth over a number of years against all the resources and ingenuity of Ali Pacha is very stirring and full of episode; and, since it is rapidly passing away among things forgotten, the Iliad of Suli may well be told again.

Soon after the failure of the Orloff expedition, referred to in connection with the career of Androutzos, there arose upon the scene an extraordinary man, who was destined to exercise no little influence, both directly and indirectly, upon the fortunes of the Greeks. The methods are well known by which Ali, the son of a Bey of Tepelen, a Tosk Albanian, whose utmost ambition had been to preserve for himself a revenue of forty purses paid him by the district of Zagora, took advantage of the semi-feudal and wholly anarchical condition of Epirus to centre in his own person the authority which had been exercised by his victims, until he had gradually acquired the sovereignty over a population of nearly two million Albanians, Greeks, and Turks, in Acarnania, Livadia, Arta, and Prévesa — as well as Macedonia—with the titles of Vizir of Jannina and

Tricala. When he was at the height of his power, there remained, however, within the immediate vicinity of Jannina, in the mountains of Chamouri, a military population which still ventured to deny his authority, and maintain their own time-honoured independence.

The policy of Turkey throughout the century had been the gradual weakening of the powerful Armatoli in Greece and Epirus; the attempt to withdraw, little by little, privileges which were becoming dangerous, and to supplant the Christian bands with a new Mussulman militia. No more zealous agent for this object could be found than Ali of Tepelen, who, in 1787, was appointed Dervenipacha, or Warden of the Passes, with a tolerably free hand. The Suliotes, who apprehended the fate which was in store for them, uniting with several bands of Klephts from Thessaly, and notably with that of the famous Androutzos, descended from their mountains, and, trusting in the assistance which they fondly anticipated from the Philhellenic sentiments of the Empress Catherine, took the initiative by attacking the armies of Ali, who was able to dispose of from ten to twelve thousand trained Albanians, and gained considerable successes against forces very superior numerically. The sovereigns of Europe were, however, at this period, too much disturbed by the outbreak of the French Revolution and subsequent developments to take their eyes off their own immediate interests; and the Suliotes, finding themselves without prospect of support, retired into their mountains to await the vengeance of Ali. The fate of Androutzos has been already recorded.

The origin of the Suliotes is lost in obscurity. A

work, written by a native of Parga, entitled "A Concise History of Suli and of Parga," which is dated 1801, professes to be able to trace their history back for 150 years. The chief families traced their origin to different villages and districts; and, though their language was Greek, they appear to have consisted, for the most part, of Christian Albanians, with a small admixture of Greeks, who, flying from the oppression of the invaders, had taken refuge in the well-nigh inaccessible mountains of Chamouri (Chimari), and had there established a curious patriarchal community. In former times, Suli was a Spahilik; the Haratch and the dues of the Spahi were regularly paid by the various villages; but the last Spahi of Suli, Bekir Bey, was imprisoned and put to death by Ali, who had failed by other means to obtain the Spahilik for himself.

Colonel Leake thus describes the famous gorge of Suli.[1] "At the end of the pass," he says, "formed by the hollow between the mountain of Suli and the hill of Trypa, stands the ruined village of Avariko, from whence there is a descent into a deep ravine, formed by the meeting of the two great mountains of Suli and Tzikurates—one of the darkest and the deepest of the glens of Greece. On either side rise perpendicular rocks, in the midst of which are little intervals of scanty soil, bearing holly-oaks, ilices, and other shrubs, and which admit occasionally a view of the higher summits of the two mountains, covered with oaks, and, at the summit of all, with pines. Here the road is passable only on foot, by a perilous ledge along the side of the mountain of Suli, terminating at a narrow opening, where the

[1] Leake, "Travels in Northern Greece," vol. i.

Acheron enters the defile from the vale of Tervitziana. The river in the pass is deep and rapid, and is seen at the bottom falling, in many places, in cascades over the rocks, though at too great a distance to be heard, and in most places inaccessible to any but the foot of a goat or a Suliote." A fit setting for one of the grimmest fights that was ever fought, that gloomy gorge, which rises from the river of death, running silent from very distance in the depths below.

At the time when they became conspicuous in history the Suliotes were possessed of four villages in the great ravine of Suli, namely, Kiapha, Avaríko, Samoniva, and Kako-Suli, composing a group known as the Tetrachorion; and seven villages in the plains, whose inhabitants, being considered genuine Suliotes, were allowed to retire into the mountain in time of war. This Heptachorion consisted of Tzikurátes, Perikhátes, Vela, Alsochori, Kondates, Gkinóla, and Tzeflíki. They also controlled between fifty and sixty tributary villages, with a mixed population of Greeks and Albanians; but these were abandoned to their fate in war. In the early part of the last century the Suliotes are said not to have had more than 200 fighting-men, although they were almost always engaged in petty warfare and marauding expeditions; and at the period of their extraordinary successes the numbers of the Suliotes proper never exceeded 5,000 souls, with a fighting strength of 1,500 men, who were, however, reinforced at need by the women. Their government was purely patriarchal; they had neither written laws nor law courts, and the family formed the political unit of the State. The families were grouped together in tribal alliances called Pharas, of which there

were twenty-nine in the Tetrachorion and eighteen in the Heptachorion. All disputes were settled by arbitration by the heads of the Pharas; and these forty-seven elders formed a sort of general Council, the matter for discussion being almost exclusively war. As they were gradually driven from the plains which had supported them to the mountains, which produced nothing but pasture for their flocks, they were of necessity compelled to support themselves by marauding expeditions, which involved them in perpetual difficulties with the surrounding Ottoman governors. The historian of Suli enumerates no less than eight wars in which the community was involved before their great struggle with Ali, throughout which they maintained their position with tolerable success, and secured considerable material advantage by the ransom of prisoners. Arts and commerce were unknown to them, and the training to arms formed the sole occupation of their youth. Each individual had his appointed place in war, men, women and children, their distinctive duties, though little or nothing has been recorded of their manner of organization. On the approach of an enemy the Suliotes of the Heptachorion abandoned their villages and blocked the defiles, while their kinsmen from the heights came down to their assistance, the women and children retiring into the mountain, which was looked upon as the citadel and sacrum of the whole community. Their manner of warfare was regulated by the scanty number of fighting-men of whom they were able to dispose. When, therefore, a large body of enemies was to be encountered, they would send but few to meet them, opposing against some thousands

only from one to two hundred Suliotes, who looked on themselves as a forlorn hope, and pursued the Klephtic tactics, attacking from scattered posts of vantage on the heights in cover of rocks and trees. Where a small body was reported to be advancing, they sallied forth in equal strength, hoping thus to inflict a summary defeat and to secure spoil and prisoners to ransom. Only after years of training were they permitted to take part in more difficult enterprises, where it was necessary that every unit should follow the movements of his neighbour ; and this apparent individual initiative was really the result of intelligently concerted action. To be wounded by unnecessary exposure was in itself disgraceful. The women often accompanied their forays, carrying arms and ammunition, and sometimes fighting themselves. They were unsparing critics of the mettle of their men, and kept the standard of military honour high, having privileges amongst themselves of precedence when filling their jars or watering their flocks at the fountain, according to the merits and services of their husbands ; and it was at these meetings in the daily life of the village communities that the wives of men who had failed to acquit themselves bravely were subjected to all the indignities which the shrewish tongues of their neighbours could heap on them. The vendetta existed among them ; but family quarrels were generally stopped by the intervention of the women, and a fine was not unfrequently imposed in commutation for a life, since the killing of a single individual was a serious loss to the commonwealth at large. At the head of this little republic at the period of their final crisis in the struggle for existence was an ascetic monk named Samuel, who

combined in his person the double character of warrior and priest. His influence with the Suliotes was unbounded; and he believed himself, and was certainly held by his followers, to be an inspired prophet. Such were the famous inhabitants of the mountain fastnesses of Chamouri, who had ventured to defy the rising star of Ali of Tepelen.

His vengeance was not slow to follow. In 1792, he collected a considerable force, and, announcing an expedition against Argyrócastro, invited the chiefs of the two principal families of Suli—those of Tzavellas and Bótzaris—to take part, offering double pay to all who would accompany him. Bótzaris declined, but Tzavellas, with some seventy adherents, joined the expedition. At the end of the first day's march, however, when the Suliotes had laid aside their arms to rest, they were treacherously seized, and all made prisoners, with the exception of three, who escaped. Of these two were shot, but the third succeeded in eluding the aim of his pursuers, and got away to Suli in time to warn his countrymen. When Ali arrived before the ravine of Suli, he found all the passes guarded; he therefore addressed himself to Tzavellas, and threatened him with all the tortures which his dungeons at Jannina could devise if he did not succeed in obtaining the submission of Suli. Tzavellas undertook to negotiate terms, sending for his young son Photos, a youth of eighteen, to take his place as a hostage in the Pacha's hands. Ali remained encamped at the foot of the mountains of Suli, where he soon received the following letter:—

"Ali Pacha, I am proud to have succeeded in cheating a scoundrel; it is to defend my country against

a robber that I have come here. My son will die, but I have good hope of avenging him, before I die also. Certain Turks of your own sort will assert that I am an unnatural father to sacrifice my son for my freedom. I, in answer, say, if you had taken our mountain, you would have killed my son, my whole family, and all my countrymen, nor could I have avenged their death. If, on the other hand, we conquer, I shall have other children, for my wife is young. As to my son, young as he is, he will be proud to be sacrificed for his country. Were he not, he would be unworthy to live, or to be my son. He will meet death with courage; or he would not deserve to be called a true son of Greece, our country. Come quickly, infidel; I burn for vengeance!—TZAVELLAS."

This letter has a special interest, as showing that already so far north, and among a community at most only very partially of Hellenic origin, the idea of Greece as the common fatherland had been developed. The rage of the Pacha at the trick which had been played on him knew no bounds; but he did not, strange to say, wreak his vengeance on his young hostage, who was reserved for a time, and who, indeed, survived to become the hero of Suli's final struggle. The boy was, however, brought before Veli, the son of Ali, who told him that in consequence of his father's treachery, he would be roasted alive, to which he simply replied, "My father will roast your father, if he catches him."

Ali assembled some seven or eight thousand of his best troops, and harangued them, promising a gratuity of 500 piastres a man if they succeeded in reaching and mastering Kako-Suli; and on the 20th

July, 1792, they entered the defile, which was defended by 1,300 men. The Suliotes, from various points of vantage, inflicted terrible losses on his compact body of troops, without suffering any proportionate injury, and, gradually retreating before their overwhelming numbers, drew them on further and further into the gorges. As they were nearing Suli itself, and success seemed to be favouring the Pacha's troops, they were suddenly attacked in front by a band of Suliote women, led by Moscho the wife of Tzavellas, who poured a deadly fire on them from close quarters, and then with naked swords rushed shrieking on their hesitating assailants. The men of Suli now poured down the mountain sides, attacking them on either flank, responding to the orders of Bótzaris and Tzavellas to fling away their rifles and only use their swords. Panic-struck, the disciplined Albanians broke, and a wild rout ensued. They fled in every direction, abandoning their arms and their baggage, pursued down the gorge by the warriors and the amazons of Suli. Ali himself, who had watched the combat from a distance, killed two horses in his panic-stricken flight to Jannina, where he shut himself up in his palace for a fortnight, seeing and speaking to no one, and, in the words of Valaoritis—

> "All the after-days he lived on earth
> He seemed to see that white kilt of Tzavellas."

In this defeat it is said that some 3,000 Albanians perished; of the Suliotes, 74 were killed and 100 wounded. Ali was compelled to offer terms of peace through the intervention of an Orthodox bishop, making concessions of territory; releasing all his prisoners,

including Photos Tzavellas; and paying a ransom of 100,000 piastres for the recovery of those who had fallen into the hands of the Suliotes. That this defeat was really a serious blow to him is proved by the fact that in a long panegyric of Ali, composed by an Albanian of Jannina, in which most of his reverses are passed over, it is alluded to in the following terms:—

> "To-day we have been ruined; to-morrow I shall conquer,
> And I will roast the monk at Suli."

The story of Moscho, the wife of Tzavellas, is a favourite topic in the people's poetry; here is a fragment, transcribed by Fauriel:—

> A bird is alit on the span of the bridge;
> It sings a song of sorrow, and says to Ali Pacha,
> "Not here is Jannina, for you to deck with fountains;
> Not here is Préveza, for you to 'stablish fortresses;
> This is the famous Suli, is Suli the renowned,
> Where the little children march to war, the women and the children;
> Where the wife of Tzavellas combats, her sabre in her hand,
> Her babe upon one arm, her gun upon the other,
> And her apron filled with cartridges. . . . ."

Similarly, another ends:—

> "This is that Evil-Suli, in all the world renowned,
> Where the wife of Tzavellas fights like the best of heroes;
> She carries cartridges in her apron, the sabre in her hand,
> And with her rifle leads all the others on."

The defeat of Ali's army, which has been described above, is graphically told in the following song:—

## TZAVELLAS.[2]

The priest's wife called from Avarikos :
"Where are you, children of Tzavellas ? where are you, children of Bótzaris ?
A great dark cloud comes up against you of footmen and of horsemen.
They are not one, nor two, nor three, nor yet five thousand—
They are eighteen thousand, they are nineteen thousand in numbers."
"Let them come, this wretched horde of Turks,[3] what can they do to harm us ?
Let them come and see a battle and know the Klephtic muskets ;
Let them know the sword of Lambros, the musket of Bótzaris,
The arms of Suli's women, of Moscho the well-renowned !"
When the fight had begun, and in the midst of the firing,
Tzavellas cried to Zervas and Bótzaris :
"Now let the firing cease ; the time has come for the sabre."
From his post Bótzaris answered, answered stoutly.
"Not yet," he cried, "has come the moment for the sabre !
Keep close yet in the cover, behind your sheltering boulders ;
For the Turks are very many, and few the men of Suli."
Then cried Tzavellas to his pallikari :
"Will ye wait for these Albanian curs one moment longer ?"
Then they snatched the scabbards from their swords, and broke them ;
And as it were a flock of sheep they drove the Turks before them.
Veli Pacha cried to his men to turn and face them ;
But with tears in their eyes his men made answer :
"Ah, this is not Delvino, and this is never Widin ;
This is Suli the famous, renowned the whole world over ;
Here is the sword of Lambros, with Turkish blood stained crimson,
Which has made all Albania wear the dress of mourning,
Made widows weep their husbands, and mothers weep their children."

[2] Fauriel.

[3] The word Turk is loosely used for Mussulman. There was very possibly not a single Turk in the army of Ali.

After this success, the Suliotes were left in peace for seven years. In the meantime Lambros Tzavellas died, and George Bótzaris, with his *Phara*, which included two hundred fighting men, had abandoned Suli and its cause. This defection encouraged the Pacha of Jannina, whose prosperity had gone on increasing, and who could now reckon upon an army of upwards of twenty thousand men, to return to the attack. It was at the beginning of his campaign in 1800, that Photos Tzavellas, the son of Lambros, at the head of a small band, distinguished himself by several acts of surprising and successful audacity, which led to his selection as chief commander of the Suliote forces. These reverses, and the memory of his former disaster, suggested to Ali the policy of blockading the Suliotes in their mountains, and reducing them by famine, and having drawn a close cordon round all the passes, he proceeded to construct small forts or towers, with which to overawe them. This form of blockade was continued during nine months without any relief from without to Suli, save the scanty supplies which they were able to secure by their daring raids on the stores of their besiegers. Romantic stories are told of the methods by which they obtained provisions. A Suliote dressed in his grey cloak succeeded in eluding notice, and creeping in among a herd of the enemy's cattle, was enabled during the night to conduct them into the ravine of Suli. A party of old men and children marched successfully away to the Ionian Islands; and a foraging expedition, consisting of some six hundred men and women, managed to reach Parga, now a dependency of Corfu, in safety, whence they returned laden with supplies to the relief of the well-

nigh exhausted garrison, who had been reduced to munching acorns and bark, and boiling the rude herbage of the rocks for food.

Meanwhile, the troops of Ali, who were getting tired of the blockade, began to desert, and no pains were spared by the Pacha to procure the disaffection of the various leaders of Pharas in Suli, by individual offers of a tempting character, and by offers to the community in general of money and lands, in return for submission. Occasional suspensions of hostilities for the discussion of terms enabled the Suliotes to renew their supplies ; but they had no faith in Ali's professions, and his execution of the Suliote hostages, whom the Pacha of Delvino had retained as a guarantee of alliance, when they fell into his hands, confirmed their mistrust. Then a new incident occurred. Ali received orders from Constantinople to march on Adrianople, which was in revolt, and was compelled to partially raise the blockade. The Suliotes replenished their granaries and storehouses, and constructed, under the guidance of the monk Samuel, who had discovered the Book of Revelation to be a series of denunciations and predictions levelled against their implacable enemy, the fortress of Kunghi, to serve as a receptacle for their stores. The fortress, and the custody of their material, was placed under the care of this extraordinary man, who, sabre in one hand and cross in the other, was ever in the front of battle, and who was now honoured by them with the ancient title of Polemarch.

At this crisis in their fortunes, there arrived a new parliamentary from Ali, in the person of Kitzo Bótzaris, the son of that George whose defection was looked on as a

national disgrace, and who had since died or been poisoned by the master whose service he had entered. Kitzo, however, had not fought against his country, and his known personal valour secured him a favourable hearing; a little later he nobly vindicated the honour of his family, and proved himself a true son of Suli. The terms proposed by Ali were, that Kitzo should undertake the government of Suli, with a guard of forty Albanian soldiers, introduced to guarantee the vizir's lands and villages against any raids; and that Photos Tzavellas should be exiled. Councils were divided; many were weary of the war, which had now lasted almost without intermission for two years; and during this suspension of hostilities rivalries of headship had grown up, to the detriment of the common cause. Tzavellas, perceiving the spirit of the assembly, and unwilling to be an obstacle to peace, with disinterested patriotism, set fire to his house, and with tears in his eyes withdrew from the mountains he had defended so well. He was induced to go to Jannina, whence he undertook a mediatory expedition to Suli, as the other condition of peace had not been complied with. On his arrival, his repentant countrymen endeavoured to retain him, but he had pledged his word to return to Jannina, and would not stay. He had only undertaken the mission in order to see Suli once again; but he assured them that Ali was implacable, that no terms offered and accepted would be observed, and, therefore, that they had no choice but war. Then, faithful to his promise, he returned to Jannina, and was immediately thrown into prison.

The popular muse has thus recorded the departure of Photos and his message to the men of Suli:—

"'My children, no submission, endure not to be rayahs;
While Photos is alive, he will not bow to any Pacha;
For Pacha Photos has his sword, his musket for Vizir.'
And they have banished him to Frankland, to stranger kingdoms.
A curse upon you Bótzaris, and on you, Koutsoníka,
For the work that you have done this summer—
'Twas you showed Veli Pacha the way to Kako-Suli!"

The material aid in the way of powder and lead which Suli received from the French enabled the Pacha to obtain from Constantinople an order for its reduction, and the siege was pressed on with renewed vigour. The Suliotes pursued their old tactics—drawing the enemy on into the ravine by declining an engagement, and then repulsing the first attack on the strongholds with loss. But a traitor arose in the camp. The liberty of his son-in-law and a beggarly sum of money were the bribes for which Pylios Gousi undertook to secrete 200 Albanians by night in his own house. There were only fifty-five defenders in Suli, when a night-assault was made in force, and the 200 sallying out attacked these in the rear simultaneously. Kako-Suli was lost through the treachery of Pylios Gousi, as also was Avaríko; only Kiapha and the fort of Kunghi remained.

At this juncture Tzavellas, who had now languished in prison for nearly a year at Jannina, succeeded in obtaining an audience of Ali, and in persuading him of his ability, if permitted to go to Kiapha, to draw off all the adherents of his Phara, which would leave the remaining Suliotes at Ali's mercy. The Pacha, who now looked upon the fall of Suli as a mere matter of time, consented, having nothing to lose by such a proposal, and hoping to precipitate the crisis; but he

exacted that his wife and children should be detained as hostages for his loyalty. Returning to Kiapha, Photos persuaded his countrymen to use this opportunity to get rid of all the infirm and aged, obtaining hostages for their security from the Pacha, as though they were able-bodied, and, having taken the necessary precautions for their safe transmission to Parga, and thence to the Ionian Islands, he returned to Kiapha, where he found the forces of the Suliotes so much weakened by disaffection and desertions that he determined to remain, abandoning his wife and children to the Pacha's mercy if he chose to take his advantage, while he entrenched himself with Samuel and all the loyal Suliotes he could collect in the fortress of Kunghi. Here they were besieged by Ali's son, Veli, with a very large force of Albanians; and when at last reduced by want of water to make terms, they obtained a written permission to depart, couched in the most reassuring terms, and guaranteed by a grim oath, which was signed by all the chief beys and agas. Relying on this document they marched out, some two-thirds of them accompanying Photos Tzavellas, and marching towards Parga, the remainder retiring with Kitzo Bótzaris to the mountain of Zalongos.

Only the monk Samuel, with five wounded Suliotes, remained behind. It is recorded that he had collected all the powder in his charge into the little church at Kunghi, and there, with his five companions, he awaited the summons of Veli to surrender his trust. He had laid aside his sword, and now issued from behind the painted screen holding the sacred cup in one hand and a lighted fuse in the other; he administered the

communion to his five comrades, drank of the cup himself, and swore that neither on earth nor in heaven would he surrender the keys of Kunghi. As the blows fell upon the door and the Albanians broke in, he plunged the fuse into the powder and perished with many beside. The story was told by two of the Suliotes, who miraculously escaped with their lives.

Veli's first act, on becoming master of Suli, was to violate his most sacred promise by despatching a force of 4,000 men to attack the band which was marching upon Parga. Photos, however, had already reached protected territory, and his followers were allowed to take refuge in the Ionian Islands, then under Russian protection. Veli next surrounded the mountain of Zalongos, and proceeded to storm the position which Kitzo Bótzaris and his followers had occupied. Fighting went on without intermission by day and by night. On the second day of the battle occurred the famous incident which showed the desperate determination and courage of the women who suckled these Klephts of the mountain. Some sixty of these, with their children, were assembled on a ledge of rock overhanging a sheer precipice, and, having witnessed the gradual extermination of their defenders, they resolved to die by their own act rather than fall into the hands of the grisly tyrant of Jannina. The position which they occupied suggested an easy form of death, and the manner in which they sought it was tragically weird and grim. First, each mother took her child, embraced it, and, turning her own head away from the pitiful scene, pushed it over the edge of the abyss. Then these sixty women linked their hands together, and, singing the familiar dancing

song of Suli above the rattle of the musketry, danced the old syrtos measure round and round the ledge of rock, having each her back to the void as the winding chain approached the brink. And every time the chain wound round, one dancer, the last in line, unlinked her hand, took one step back, and fell down into annihilation. One by one, without haste, without pause, singing the dancing song, they followed each other down that leap of death, until the last sprung over alone, consecrating the mountain with their blood an altar of liberty, from which, ere long, a flame arose that fired those ancient ranges from historic sea to sea.

The surviving defenders of Zalongos, placing their women in their midst, while many of the men carried a child in one arm, and a sword in the other, cut their way through the besieging lines. Some 150 succeeded thus in escaping under the leadership of Kitzo Bótzaris, and joined a considerable band of their countrymen, who had at various times seceded, and occupied the village of Bougaréli. They had learned, however, that whatever had been their policy in the past, the name of Suliote was sufficient to single them out for Ali's ultimate vengeance. They therefore retired to a strong position in the Agrapha mountains, where in 1804 they were besieged by seven thousand Albanians, and after some four months fighting, were eventually all slain or captured, with the exception of 160 women, who threw themselves into the Achelous, and were drowned, and of fifty-five men and one woman, who, under Kitzo Bótzaris, escaped to Parga, and thence to the Ionian Islands.

One other famous incident marks the close of this tragic tale. In the Suliote village of Reniassa, the

Albanians found only a few women and children, whom they murdered or carried off. But from one fortified tower, the Suliote wife, Despo, with her seven daughters and daughters-in-law, and three grandchildren, poured a severe fusillade upon the invaders. Then, knowing their inevitable doom, they gathered round an open case of ammunition in the central room, while Despo thrust a burning fuse into the midst of the powder, and all perished together in the ruins of their tower.

Thus, after a war of nearly twenty years against all the resources and the best troops of the Sultan's most powerful satrap, the little commonwealth ceased to exist. The survivors of this unequal struggle were dispersed, and dwelt as refugees under the shelter of foreign flags. Henceforth they were identified with the cause of Greece, and in her roll of honour is written many a Suliote name. Twenty years later, another Tzavellas and another Bótzaris[4] were leading the forlorn hope from the walls of the heroic Misolonghi.

The immolation of Samuel is recorded in many songs. Here is one which rings like a wail from the mountains :—

A little bird has come the way from Suli—
The men of Parga questioned it, the men of Parga ask :
"Whence art thou, little bird, and whither, bird, art going ?"
"I come from Suli, and I go to the land of the Franks."
"Tell us some news, little bird, tell us good tidings."
"Ah ! what tidings shall I bring you ? what story shall I tell ?
They have taken Suli, have taken it, and Avaríkos too ;
They have taken dread Kiapha, and taken Kunghi,
And there they burned the monk, and other four beside him."[5]

[4] Kitzos Tzavellas and Noti Bótzaris were at the head of two divisions in the famous last sorties from Misolonghi, on the 22nd of April, 1826.

[5] Fauriel.

The story of Despo is thus sung by the popular muse :—

DESPO.[6]

A grim noise is heard—the sound of musketry in quick succession ;
Do they fire for a wedding-feast, or is it a day of rejoicing ?
It is for no wedding-feast they fire, for no day of rejoicing—
It is Despo fighting, her daughters and her sons' wives beside her ;
The Albanians have assailed her in the tower of Dimoulas.
"Wife of George, lay down your arms, for this is not your Suli ;
Here you are the Pacha's slave, the prisoner of the Albanians."
"And if Suli be yielded, and Kiapha now be Moslem,
Still Despo owns not, will not own, the Liápids her masters."
She took a fuse up in her hand, she called her daughters round her—
"Slaves of the Turks we will not live ; so follow me, my children !"
She thrust it in the powder pile, and in the flame they vanished !

The following song records the capture and release of Photos Tzavellas :—

PHOTOS.[7]

What was the evil-hap that fell this summer-tide,
That all the Klephts bewail and find no consolation.
Their limeria have been ravaged, and the very mountain herbage,
Since their chief was taken prisoner, the Captain Tzavellas,
Whom they bore off to Jannina with thrice a thousand Turks—
A thousand marched before him, two thousand followed after ;
The Derveni-aga brought him to the gate of Ali Pacha.
And Ali, when he learned, was very glad at heart ;
He gave his guards the order to bring him up before him,
That he might see him face to face, and talk with him awhile.
He scarce had finished speaking, when they brought Photos in,
And Ali Pacha addressed him, and spoke him fair :

[6] Fauriel. [7] Λελέκος.

"Friend Photos, why so witless, refusing me thine homage ;
It ever was my will to number thee with mine,
To have thee for an armatole, and name thee my chief captain ?"
And Photos he made answer, and fearlessly he said,
"I will not be an armatole, I will not be a captain,
To bend the knee to Liápids, to bend the knee to tyrants."
Ali Pacha, when he heard him, was very wrath indeed.
He called to Morebrèt, and said to him in anger,
"Lead forth this cuckold rascal, lead forth this robber,
And cast him into prison, in the dungeon underground."
And, there and then, they shut him up in the gloomy dungeon,
And Photos writes a letter, and sends it to Kakosuli :
"My mother, oft I greet thee, and much I kiss thy hand ;
To Háïda my greetings, and kisses on her eyes.
Now, never let the fighting cease by day and night as well ;
They hold me fast in the island, and in the monastery
At Paneleēmon, in the prison bound,
With two chains on my neck, and four upon my hands,
And irons on my feet, to a tree fast riveted ;
And there are eighteen pallikars for sentinels without.
My mother, send my children, and send me here my wife,
That I may yield them to the Pacha, as hostages to the Vizir,
That I may get out of prison, escape from these my chains,
That I may gird my sword on and come and rescue them.
And hearken, sons of Photos, and Pallikars of Drakos,
While Photos lives he bends the knee before no Pacha ;
He knows no Pacha, save the sword that is dyed in Turkish blood !"

# CHAPTER XI.

## LYRICAL POETRY.

HITHERTO we have been considering such elements of the folk-poetry as have been included under the general classification of epical in sentiment. It remains to glance briefly at the far more extensive and by no means less interesting development of the popular muse, which, for the convenience of arrangement, has been described as lyrical in spirit. A few specimens will be given of the natural lyric, as expressed in love songs, or as responding to the inspiration of nature; of domestic poems and songs belonging to special occasions and anniversaries; of narrative poems, partaking rather of the ballad character; and, finally, of the songs of death and lamentation.

To begin with those of whose antiquity there is ample evidence, it has been mentioned that there exists in the Vienna Library a certain *Codex manuscriptus theologicus Græcus*, which was among the documents collected at Constantinople in the 16th century by Augier Busbecq, Austrian Ambassador to the Porte, from the few remnants which had escaped destruction at the fall of the Byzantine Empire. This Codex contains a considerable number of Greek popular songs of a date anterior to the 15th century.[1] The majority of them are erotic, or at any rate sensuous, bright, and fierce, without any trace of the Northern idealism.

[1] Published in the collection of Emile Legrand, Paris, 1874.

Girl of Parnassus.

The following translation is an extract from a long poem called the "Seduction," and many of its lines are found repeated and remoulded in songs of a more recent date :—

"When the raven shall grow white as is the dove,
When you shall see the raven pursue the falcon,
When the sea shall be sown with wheat and barley,
And when you see the fishes wander in the mountains,
When the dog and the hare shall be as brothers,
When the cat and the mouse shall ply their trade together,
When the ass becomes an angel and grows wings to fly with,
When you see the sun alter his course in heaven,
And when you see the white thorn turn to myrtle,
When the apple-tree becomes the scrub that clothes the valleys,
When you shall see the ocean foam no longer,
Then you and I, my lady, are likely to be wed!"
The maiden had a ready wit, and she perceived his meaning,
And thus to the young man she made answer :
"When the wide heaven drops down upon the earth,
When truth, young man, shall pass for falsehood,
When you find the sea beginning to turn sweet,
And when among the dead springs up the herb of resurrection,
When the moon drops from the sky to earth and is extinguished,
Then I will give you a sweet kiss, oh, my master!"

Which elaborate defiance is, of course, only the prelude to mutual surrender.

Another from the same collection has a very modern ring :—

"I would I were a swallow to fly into thy bed,
To make my nest among thy pillows,
To wake thee with my twitter, that thou mightest not forget me ;
Have me in memory, loved one, through all the days thou livest.
Of this be well assured, and know that I have told thee,
My love for thee is rooted fast to last for evermore."

The same motives recur again and again. A little snatch which Fauriel heard sung as a complete song in the islands, and of which several variants may be found in Passow's collection, is embodied in a longer poem recorded by Legrand, and in either case reads almost like a distant echo of Meleager's unsurpassable rhythm:—

> Νὺξ ἱερὴ καὶ λύχνε, συνίστορας οὔτινας ἄλλους
> ὅρκοις, ἀλλ' ὑμέας εἱλόμεθ' ἀμφότεροι.[2]

The island version runs:—

"When we kissed each other, dear, it was night—who could have seen us?
It was night and dawn that saw us, the stars saw and the moon;
But a star dropped down and told it to the sea,
The sea has told the oar-blade, the oar has told the sailor,
And the sailor went and sang it at the window of his love."

The longer poem is as follows:—

I pass and say no word; the maiden greets me:
"Whither away, filcher of kisses, deceiver in love?"
"If I am a filcher of kisses, if I am a deceiver in love,
Why did you surrender me your lips to kiss tenderly?"
"And if I surrendered you my lips to kiss tenderly,
It was night—who could have seen us? it was day-dawn—who was looking?"
"The night and the day-dawn saw us, the star saw and the moon;
The star leaned down and told it to the sea,
The sea told it to the oar, and the oar to the sailor,
And the sailor went and published it to all the wide world.
I kissed the red lips, and they stained my own lips,

[2] "Holy night, and thou, O lamp, you, and you two only, did we take to be witness of our vows."

I dried them on the handkerchief, the handkerchief was stained,
I washed it in the river, and the river caught the staining.
The river waters a fair garden,
Waters the trees, the fruit trees and the coppice.
But for one tree—a sweet apple—there was not enough water—
There is one tree whose leaves are dying, turning yellow,
And another apple questions it, another makes inquiry,
'What ails thee, apple tree, to wither and turn yellow?
Art thou in need of water, or have they cut thy branches?'
'I do not want for water, they have not cut my branches,
But they plighted a youth and maiden beneath my shelter;
They swore by my branches that they would cling together,
And now, because I know they part, my leaves are turning yellow.'"

Many of the islands have quite a little literature of their own. Thus, the next in order is from a collection of some fifty songs, peculiar to the island of Karpathos (Scarpanto).

A little bird was singing high up on the rough hill-side,
And a king's daughter listened from her window,
"Ah, bird, that I had thy beauty, and would I had thy song,
And would I had such golden plumes for hair upon my head!"
"Why dost thou crave my beauty? why dost thou crave my song?
Why dost thou crave my golden plumes for hair upon thy head?
For thou hast cakes to feed on, as many as thou wilt,
I eat my scanty portion from herbage in the fields;
Thou sleepest on a lofty couch, with sheets of thread of gold,
But I lie out in solitude among the dews and snows;
And when thou drinkest water thou hast a gleaming cup,
But I must drink my water from the spring thou bathest in;
Thou waitest for the priest to come thy way to bless thee,
But I await the huntsman, who comes to shoot me down."

While, from still further away from the other side of the Ægean, Smyrna sends the following:—

"In a fair garden
Bejewelled with flowers
One morning I wandered
To solace my care,
To distract my heart
From all its brooding;
For I am tortured
By a maiden that I love.
And there, as I wandered
About the garden,
I stayed to gaze on
The flowers that I love best.
In the branches of a citron
A little bird was sitting,
And the pretty bird
Was warbling sweetly;
And, as it warbled,
It seemed to me to say:
"Consider, youth, the flowers,
How ephemeral are they!
Youth and maid, be glad of joy,
Never lose an hour;
Time is ever marching on,
And nevermore comes back."[3]

Here, again, is a pretty little song from Crete:—

Maiden, red as roses and white as marble is,
Did an angel from the sky come down to fashion thee?
I trust to find my rose perennial in new bloom,
And many a thorn for its dear sake I cherish and abide.
I water this my rose-tree, and prune its branches well,
And when the rose-thorns wound me, I find my joy therein.[4]

A very distinctive feature of the popular muse is the distich, or rhyming couplet, embodying a single thought

[3] Marcellus.

[4] Elpis Melena: Κρητικὴ Μέλισσα. Athens, 1888.

of a more or less epigrammatical character, or some graceful simile, dedicated to the eyes, or the lips, or the hair of the beloved. As with the Tuscan *stornelli*, every peasant knows a number of such distiches by heart, and many have a talent for improvising them. In the introductory chapter, in dealing with the rhythm of the folk-songs, a specimen of the rhyming distich was duly included. I propose, however, to quote a few more here in the original text, which, read by the light of the translation, may serve to convey, even to those who have no knowledge of modern Greek, some idea of the delicate charm of the language, the balance and contrast in the lines which clothe an idea, often in itself so slight as to be lost in the endeavour to convey its interpretation.

*'Απ' ὅλα τ' ἄστρα τ' οὐρανοῦ ἕνα 'ναι ποῦ σοῦ 'μοιάζει,*
*Ποῦ 'βγαίνει τὰ μεσάνυκτα, καὶ ὅλα τὰ σκοτεινιάζει.*

Of all the stars in heaven, but one is like to thee—
The star that comes at midnight and makes all the others dim.[5]

*'Ιατρικὸν καὶ ἰατρὸς εἶσαι ὅταν θελήσῃς,*
*Μ' ἕνα σου βλέμμα ἱλαρὸν ζωὴν θὰ μοῦ χαρίσῃς.*[6]

Drug and physician both thou art, whene'er it is thy will;
Renew the gladness of my life with one look of thine eyes.

*Βουνὰ, μὴ πρασινίσετε, πουλιὰ, μὴν κελαειδῆτε,*
*Μ' ἀρνήθηκ ἡ ἀγάπη μου, ὅλα νὰ λυπηθῆτε.*[7]

Be green no more, ye mountains, and sing no more, ye birds;
Because my love is faithless let all the world be sad.

[5] Elpis Melena. *'βγαίνει* = *ἐκβαίνει*, the star Aphrodite called *Αὐγερινός*, the star of dawn.

[6] Ibidem.

[7] *Λελέκος.* Epidorpion.

Ὅλα τὰ λέλουδα τῆς γῆς, τἄνθη τοῦ Παραδείσου
Μαζέψανε οἱ ἄγγελοι καὶ κάμαν τὸ κορμί σου.[8]

All flowers that are found in earth, and the blooms of Paradise,
The angels brought together to fashion this thy form.

"Two eyes of blue thou hast, of blue as the hue of heaven,
And like the Pleiads near to dawn, they sparkle each and other.[9]

"Thou hast kissed me once and sick am I, kiss me again and heal me,
And kiss me yet a third time that I may not sicken more.[1]

"My fair one, bid thy mother bring forth another like thee,
That here on earth one other heart may be consumed as mine is."[2]

Sometimes, without an effort, without losing the value of a word, they fall into corresponding verse :—

"The sun when first it rises is cradled in thy breast,
And lingers on thy yellow hair what time he sinks to rest."

"I weep and tell of what befel the first time love drew near,
Like lightning in the mountains, it flashed to disappear."

"Whene'er I meet thee moving among the other braves,
'Tis thou art the carnation, the others are the leaves."

"I would I were a plane-tree, and that thou, thou wert a vine,
That fruit of grapes might cluster where the branches intertwine."[4]

Not infrequently we find a double distich, either in the form of question and answer, or a continuation through two further lines of an idea suggested by the first couplet, though complete in itself :—

[8] Ibid. [9] Fauriel. [1] Ibid. [2] Ibid.
[3] Elpis Melena.
[4] This and the three preceding are from Δελέκος.

"I shall cross the plain, the mountains, and ask the wild things in them,
Can they not find me a drug will teach me to forget you.
And the field will say to me, 'Get hence! How have I wronged thee,
That the shadow of thy presence takes all my beauty from me?'"

Of the swallow song, sung upon the first of March, there are many varieties, beside the one alluded to in chapter V, which resembles the song of the Rhodian boys of old in its appeal to the householder for a little gift. Two versions of the *Chelidonisma* follow, of which the former is from Corfu.

Swallow mine, oh, swift one!
Swallow mine, the swift one,
Whence come you, from the wilderness?
What good gifts do you bring?
You bring me health and gladness,
And eggs of rosy hue.[5]

The swallow has come,
Has crossed the sea,
Has built her nest,
And sits and sings.
Oh, March! oh, March, the snowy,
And rainy February!
The sweet month April
Draws nigh; that stays not long,
The little birds are singing,
The trees are blossoming,

[5] Passow. In the last line the words are *κόκκινα αὐγά*, lit., red eggs. This epithet of eggs recurs occasionally in the popular poetry, and either it must be taken, like the Latin *purpureus*, to mean bright, or it may be interpreted as referring to Easter, when red-stained eggs are largely consumed, following soon after the swallows' arrival.

The fowls begin
To brood and hatch ;
The flocks prepare
To seek the mountains,
The kids to skip,
And browze the herbage ;
Man, bird, and beast
Are merry from the heart.
The frozen time is over,
The north wind and the snow.
Oh, March ! oh, March, the snowy,
And rainy February !
Fair April is at hand,
March, February, get ye gone ![6]

The song of St. Basilios, which is sung upon the first day of the year, has also been alluded to in the same chapter. It is probably of great antiquity, and may be taken as a specimen of the inconsequent type of Greek folk-song.

St. Basil is come from Cæsarea,
He carries a book and paper, paper and ink,
He writes in the book, and he reads from the paper :
"Basil, do you know your letters, and do you know any songs ?"
"I have learned my letters, but I don't know any songs."
And he leaned upon his staff to say his alpha, beta ;
The staff was of dry wood, but it put forth green shoots,
Till up in its branches there were partridges singing,
Not partridges only, but doves were up there too.[7]

Every kind of song may be used as accompaniment to the dance—plaintive airs or notes of defiance, according to the measure of the step ; but more generally love-songs or distiches, such as have been already quoted, are employed. Here is a little dancing-song from Thessaly :—

[6] Passow. [7] Ibid.

"Come to the dance, lads; maidens, come and sing,
And behold and learn of love, and the way he goes;
By the eyes he enters in, and climbs down on to the lips,
And through the lips he slips away, to take root in the heart."[8]

Another version of the same song runs:—

"I met love once in a little narrow lane;
I made him sit, and questioned him of the way love enters in—
Love enters through the eyes, drops down upon the lips,
Puts out his branches in the heart, takes root, and there remains."[9]

Wedding songs are generally local, and, as each part of the ceremony has its own particular verses or series of verses, they are for the most part too long to quote. The following little series belongs to the wedding day only, but the preliminary ceremonies and the subsequent banquets have all their proper musical accompaniment.

(*While they are dressing the Bride's Hair.*)

"Hair thou hast of fourfold fairness
Falling on thy shoulders,
And the angels comb it for thee
With their golden combs.

(*While they are robing the Bride.*)

"When thy mother bore thee
All the trees were blossoming;
And the little birds in their nests,
They, too, were singing.

(*While they put on her Ornaments.*)

"When thy mother bore thee
The sun came from on high,
Bestowed on thee thy beauty,
And then went back again.

[8] Fauriel. [9] Λελέκος.

(*When the Bride sets out.*)

"To-day the sky is bright,
And bright to-day the morning;
To-day he holds his wedding,
The eagle with the dove.

(*When they give the Bride to the Bridegroom.*)

"We have borne away the partridge
Of the many-coloured plumes,
And we have left the neighbourhood
Like a land made desolate.

(*The Mother's Song.*)

"The seven heavens are opened,
And the evangels twelve,
And they have borne my child away
From these two arms of mine."[1]

The cradle song, with its monotonous soothing cry of "Náni, Náni," is found throughout Greece in infinite variety. Of the two specimens here quoted the first is, perhaps, not more inconsequent than nursery rhymes are apt to be; while the second reveals the untrained imaginative instinct struggling with a poetic conception almost too difficult for its inadequate power of expression.

"The rose is sleeping beside the marjoram,
My little child is sleeping by his sweet mother's side;
My child is sleeping in his silver cradle,
In his cradle made of silver and of gold.
Sleep on, my child, and I will rock thee,
And I will rock thy cradle, that sweet thy slumber be;
Sleep star, new moon and morning, sleep,
And lady ocean with thy silver fishes, sleep!"

[1] Marcellus. The last stanza is obscure. It is probably only a hyperbolical expression, signifying the happiness awaiting the bride.

"Make no noise, no sudden shock,
My little child is sleeping;
*Náni, Náni, Náni, Náni,*
Be all his ailings healed!
The sun sleeps on the mountains, the partridge in the fields,
My little child is sleeping between the linen white;
Sleep sleeps upon the mountain, the partridge in the wood,
My little child is sleeping to take his fill of sleep.
Sleep, my child, with fond caresses,
Sleep nourished with perfumes,
Joy be with thine awakening,
And cakes for thy wedding day!"[2]

&c. &c. &c.

"Take him in charge, kind sleep; three sentinels I'll give him
Three sentinels, three guardians, and mighty ones all three—
The sun upon the mountains, the eagle in the fields,
And Sir Boreas, the cool wind, for guardian on the sea."
The sun went down, and the eagle fell asleep;
Sir Boreas, the cool wind, went in to the mother's house.

"My son, where wert thou yesterday, the day and the night before?
Or wast thou warring with the stars, or was it with the moon,
Or was it with the morning-star—and we good friends together?"
"I was not warring with the stars, nor warring with the moon,
Not warring with the morning-star — and ye good friends together;
But I watched by the silver cradle that held a golden boy."[3]

A little song for children on their way to school is included in Passow's collection among those which he found in the island of Andros. It is, however, also quoted, with a slight change in the last two lines, in the Memoirs of Nicholas Dragoumis, who traces it to Asia Minor, to a district where the Hellenic language was proscribed in the schools, so that the young Greeks

[2] Λελέκος. [3] Fauriel.

were obliged to go stealthily by night to the teachers who gave lessons in their own tongue. It runs :—

"Moon, bright moon of mine,
Shine on me that I may go,
That I may go to school,
That I may learn my letters,
May learn the works of God ;
How to 'broider, how to sew,
And all the will of God to know."[4]

The familiar nursery rhyme has also a place in popular literature, and the following fragments—for a few lines will suffice to show their kinship—are as difficult to repeat and as inexhaustibly recurrent as the "House that Jack Built," or the old woman with the refractory pig, of our own infancy.

"I wish I had—what do I wish I had ?
I wish I had an old man,
To take care of my garden,
My garden with the roses.
I wish I had—what do I wish I had ?
I wish I had a donkey,
For the old man to ride on,
Who takes care of my garden,
My garden with the roses.
I wish I had—what do I wish I had ?
I wish I had a horse-fly,
To sting the donkey,
Make him throw off the old man,
That takes care of my garden, &c.
I wish I had, &c.,
I wish I had a bird,
To swallow the horse-fly,
That stung the donkey,
That threw off the old man, &c.
I wish I had, &c.,
I wish I had a fox,
To eat up the bird,
That swallowed the horse-fly, &c.
I wish I had a dog,
To kill the fox,
That ate up the bird, &c.
I wish I had a stick,
To beat the dog," &c.[5]

[4] Passow, No. 278. Dragoumis. Αναμνήσεις, vol. i., p. 214.
[5] Passow (from Salonika).

And so on without any limit, but that of patience.

There was an old man,
And he had a cock,
That crew and awoke
The lonely old man.
There came a fox,
And ate the cock,
That crew and awoke
The lonely old man.
There came a dog,
And killed the fox,
That ate the cock, &c.

A tree fell down,
And crushed the dog,
That killed the fox, &c.
Then came the fire,
And burned the tree
That crushed the dog, &c.
Then came the stream,
And quenched the fire
That burned the tree, &c.
Then came an ox,
Drunk up the stream, &c.[6]

And so on—the wolf killed the ox, the shepherd killed the wolf, and the plague killed the shepherd, and there that story ends.

Thus far we have glanced at the domestic side of the folk-poetry in its lyrical aspect. A few specimens will now be given of the narrative verse which records a legend or tells a tale, and which has something of the spirit that inspired the ballad of Northern lands.

With such it is impossible not to class the Charos poems, which, however, frequently serve as myrologies, in the wider sense of the word, for, as has been already laid down, the genuine myrology is topical and spontaneously improvised.

The well-known poem of the "Bridge of Arta" has been alluded to in another place,[7] and an explanation has been offered of the superstition upon which it is based; no further introduction, therefore, is needed here.

[6] Passow.

[7] See p. 169.

## THE BUILDING OF THE BRIDGE OF ARTA.

There were five-and-forty masons, and sixty workmen more,
Who toiled to build the tower-pile upon the bridge of Arta ;
The whole day through they built it up, and at night it tumbled down.
The builders groaned and fretted, and ever made lament ;
The workmen they were merry, to have earned a new day's wage.
It fell on one fine Sunday—it was a high feast-day—
The master-builder laid him down to take a little sleep,
And in his sleep he had a dream—a vision as he slumbered—
Unless a victim perished the pile would never hold.
And neither rich nor poor man, nor any one on earth,
Save his, the master-builder's, wife, would make the foundation stand.
He called out to a labourer to go and do his bidding :
" Now go and tell thy mistress, the mistress of the house,
To dress herself and deck herself, put on her golden gauds,
Put on her gauds of silver, put on her silken gown—
Now swiftly speed and swift return and swiftly tell her thus."
He went and found her where she sat at sewing and at song.
" Now greet thee well, my mistress, the mistress of the house,
The master-builder sends me, bids you put on the gold,
Put on the gauds of silver, put on your silken gown,
And come to feast with us. . . . ."
She dressed herself, she decked herself, put on her gauds of gold,
Put on her gauds of silver, put on her silken gown ;
And there she went to find them, whereas they sat at meat.
" Now greet thee well, my mistress, the mistress of my house,
My wooing-ring has fallen down—the first I ever wore—
And therefore did I send for thee to come and pick it up."
Then, as they let her down into the midst of the tower-pile,
One heaped in earth upon her, another heaped in lime,
And he, the master-builder, he struck her with his mallet.
" Three sisters were we once, and all three of us were slain.
There was one killed in the church, and one in the monastery,
And the third, the fairest of the three, upon the bridge of Arta.
Now as my hands do tremble may its pillars tremble too,
And as my heart is throbbing, so may the bridge throb too ! "[8]

[8] Fauriel.

There are several variant versions of this poem. It reappears almost textually elsewhere as the "Bridge of Tricha"; but the mysterious commands are not conveyed by a dream, but in the voice of a little bird.

A little bird alit and sat on the middle of the arch,
It did not sing as sings a bird, nor as a swallow calls,
It only sang and said a word in human speech:
"If here be no life taken, the bridge will never stand,
No humble man, nor great one, no wayfarer may it be,
Only the master-builder's, the master's wife will do."
And when the master heard it his tears began to flow.[9]

The next poem is interesting, as illustrating the popular view of the uncanny side of Nereid and Lamia lore.

Nine times a thousand sheep, and nine times a thousand goats,
Nine brothers that kept watch on them, and nine that pastured them.
Now five were gone for bread, and three where black eyes wooed them;
Janni was left alone, the guardian of the flocks.
His mother gave him counsel, his mother spake and said,
"My Janni, so your prayers be heard, and as you wish to prosper,
Lie never down beneath the fir, nor fold the flock by the bramble;
Nor tune the pipe by the rocks that the Nereids haunt,
The Lamias of the shore can hear, can catch thy music."
But he, he never heeded the words his mother spake,
He went and sat beneath the fir, and folded the flock by the bramble,
And by the Nereid-haunted rocks he played upon the pipe.
The Lamias of the shore o'erhear, they catch his music;
One Lamia, a fair Lamia, stands by him, and thus says she:
"Play on, play, Janni, three days and nights play on—
If you out-tire me in the dance, you shall have me for a wife,

[9] Λελέκος.

And if I tire your music out, I'll take you for my husband ;"
He played, poor wight, three days he played and three nights long,
Until his lips had rotted off and fell down at his feet,
Until his hands dropped from him, as he played upon his pipe.[1]

The characteristics of Charos as the personification of an inexorable law of nature have been dwelt upon at some length, and among them the vindictive retribution they are supposed to provoke who defy his power in the pride of their youth and strength. This trait is brought out in the following poem, which is also remarkable for its dramatic force and pictorial concentration.

There was a maid who used to boast she had no fear of Charos,
For she had brothers nine, and Constantine for lover,
The lord of many houses, whose palaces were four.
So Charos turned into a bird, turned into a black swallow,
Came flying, and let go a shaft at the maiden's heart :
And her mother wept over her, her mother weeps over her ;—
"O Charos, sorrow hast thou sent for this my only daughter,
My one, my only daughter, my fair daughter!"
Then Constantine appeared, coming down the lofty gorge,
With four hundred following in his train, and sixty-two musicians ;—
"Now let the wedding mirth be still, and stilled the sound of music,
For there's a cross to see at the door of my bride's mother,
The mother of my bride is dead, or dead her father,
Or one of my brothers-in-law it is that has been wounded."
He strikes his black steed with his heel, and goes towards the church,
And finds the master-mason busied about a grave.
"Live long, O master-mason, and say whose grave is this ?"

[1] Λελέκος.

"A grave for the fair-haired maid, with the fair hair and dark eyes.
She who had brothers nine, and Constantine for lover,
The lord of many houses, whose palaces were four."
"I pray you, master-mason, make this grave a little longer,
Make it a little broader, and large enough for two?"
He drew his gilded dagger, and plunged it in his heart,
They tombed them both together, together in one grave.[2]

It is curious to compare the following two versions of the song of Charos and the Youth who wrestled with him. The first was found by Fauriel in Thessaly, the second is still sung as a myrology in Crete; the two opposite extremes, that is, of the country mainly occupied by the Hellenic-speaking race; the former divided by difficult mountain ranges from the rest of Greece almost as effectually as is the latter by a treacherous sea. And yet it is almost impossible not to postulate a common origin for the two versions in spite of the different issue of the contest.[3]

A nimble youth went swiftly down the steep mountain way,
He wore his cap upon one side, and had the plaited hair;
And as he went Charos espied him from a crest of hill,
Descended to the straight defile and waited for him there.
"Where do you come from, nimble youth, and whither do you go?"

[2] Fauriel.

[3] Many parallel cases, however, may be cited. The school song, already quoted, as found in both Andros and Smyrna, is a case in point. Another Cretan distich—

"The stream consumes the earth, the earth consumes the dead;
And maidens fair consume the young men in their pride"—

is derived from the same inspiration as that which accompanies the Eubœan dance:

"The sea consumes the mountain, the mountains the wild beasts;
The black-eyed and the fair ones consume the pallikars."

"I come from my flock," he answered, "and I am going home,
I am going to fetch bread, and then return again."
"But God has sent me," Charos said, "to fetch thy soul away."
"Let me live, Charos; oh, let me live, I entreat thee!
For I have a young wife, and widowhood ill beseems her;
If swift she walk, folks say she seeks a husband,
If slow she walk, folks chide her affectation;
And I have little children, and these will be left orphans."
But Charos never hearkened, for Charos meant to take him.
"Then, Charos, if thou art resolved, and 'tis thy mind to take me,
Come now, and let us wrestle upon this marble floor;
And Charos, if thou conquerest, then thou shalt take my soul;
But if 'tis I that conquer, then go thy way in peace."
And so they went and wrestled from morning till midday,
But by the hour of the noonday meal Charos had got him under."

And thus the story is told in Crete:[4]—

Charos was pursuing a goodly youth along the shore;
The youth turned up the mountain slope—that way went Charos too,
And he whistled to him, crying out, "Wayfarer, wait for me!"
"What dost thou bring me, Charos, that thou shouldst bid me wait?"
"I bring a target and a sword, a bow and a lance I bring thee,
And to thy wife I bring a sable veil to wear."
So they went along their way to the iron-paved threshing-floor,
And there they fought and wrestled from morning till the eve,
From evening on till morning, and on to the middle day.
And nine times over in that space the youth threw Charos down,
But after the ninth encounter the wayfarer got a fall from Charos,
And with a bound he flung himself upon the young man's chest.
"Oh, Charos, only forty days yet let me joy in life,
Because my wedding crowns are hanging in the church,
Because my wedding cakes are still in the guest-folks' houses!"[5]

[4] Elpis Melena.

[5] The crowns used in the wedding ceremony are afterwards suspended in church, and the wedding cakes are distributed among the guests. The passage indicates he was but newly married.

"Thou askest me for forty days—then live for forty years;
Thou art as brave in battle as gallant in thy prayer,
So take this 'kerchief from me, and bind it round the wreaths."
They gave the farewell greeting—good comrades each to other—
And Charos took the mountain way, the young man took the path;
So even Charos honours the love of married life.[6]

The next myrology is one of the few in which Charos figures as a boatman.

A bark has set sail laden with young folk,
At the stern the sick, the wounded in the bows,
Beneath the sail those that were drowned in the sea.
It seeks a port to enter, a haven to anchor in,
And in a fair harbour it made fast the cable.
Rumour went through the villages, it was noised among the people,
"Widows, they are selling your husbands; mothers, they sell your sons,
And you, unhappy sisters, your brothers are being sold!"
The mothers run with silver, the sisters come with gifts,
And the widows, the hapless widows, with keys in their hands,
And they that have nought come with hands clasped together.
But suddenly Charos changed his mind, and cut the cables,
And the mothers recrossed the mountains, the sisters the hills,
And the widows, the hapless widows, went across the lonely valleys.

This translation is from the text of Legrand. Another version, differing considerably, but substantially the same, is quoted by Politis from the collection of M. Razélos, and said to come from Maina. In this case the presentation of Charos as a boatman is rather due to the character of the country to which the poem belongs, than to any reminiscence of the traditional classical

[6] Lit.: "the love of the Marriage crown."

conception, a country rarely, if ever, of old entered by the land approaches, and keeping contact with the rest of the continent only by sea. In the latter version, however, the name of Charos does not occur, and, from its internal evidence, I should think it more probable that the origin of this poem was to be sought in the piratical descents with which of old these coasts were familiar, when the populations were transferred to Constantinople, and Barbary corsairs carried off numbers of their inhabitants to supply the slave-markets of the East. At a later date, when the recollection of these times had passed away, the name of Charos was, perhaps, inserted as the captain of the ill-omened ship, and the song, which had survived the memory of the circumstances it recorded, was adopted as a myrology.

If it is, unfortunately, impossible to reproduce here any of those fugitive poetic outbursts of grief which are improvised at the bedside of the dead and over the graves on anniversaries and commemoration days, there is, on the other hand, a great wealth of songs recorded which also serve on such occasions. In Maina they are generally grim in character — records of battle and murder and sudden death, such as it will please the dead to hear—messages of consolation, that the secret shot which laid low some relative has been avenged. Others, again, describe the garden of Charos in the other world, or the efforts of the dead to get away from his all-seeing vigilance. Some are mere outbursts of inconsolable sorrow, and hopeless longings to see those who have passed away once more. And sometimes, again, the mourner speaks with the dead man's voice, regretting the world he has passed away from, or

giving instructions what flowers shall be planted round his grave. The distich, the commonest vehicle for the expression of love and longing, is also used for the passionate outcry of sorrow, but set to a different cadence. Here are a few shorter specimens of these songs of lamentation :—

Young men farewell, farewell old wives, and farewell maidens sweet,
I have bound the iron fetters of Charos round my feet.

God made so many good things, but one thing failed to make,
A bridge athwart the sea, and a stair to the underworld,
That one might cross, one might descend and go to the world beneath,
And see the young folk where they sit, the old folk where they lie,
And see the little children how they fare without their mothers.

Round all the world God planted pinks and pomegranate flowers ;
But only in my dwelling-place myrologies and tears.

Charos, what have I done to thee, that thou shouldst take my child,
And leave me here to pass my days in solitude, alone ?

Like the sun he rose in splendour, and like the moon went down,
And like a branch of basil he withered where he fell.

God made so many good things, but one thing failed to make,
That as the trees take leaf, and the meadows put forth flowers,
That so the graves should open, if it were but thrice a year,
At Easter and at Christmas and Good Friday all day through.

The arms that once the brave have borne, the clothes of the luckless dead,
They never should be worn again, they never should be sold ;
They only should be hung at the gate of the Virgin's shrine,
For the rust to eat the iron, and the moth to eat the cloth.

There stood a tower at his gate, and a tree within his court,
But now the tree is rooted up, and fallen is the tower.

Charos go back to Hades, and stay there for a while,
That there be no more weeping, and love be free from pain!

There is an infinite number and variety of these little poems, and I do not necessarily pretend to have selected the best among them. But in concluding this brief summary of the themes and the forms of Greek folk-poetry, I cannot refrain from quoting once more that most beautiful of all the myrologies, which is perhaps already familiar to many readers, through the rendering of the great German poet, who was so deeply moved by its simple and suggestive pathos.

Why are the mountains dark, and why so woe-begone?
Is it the wind at war there, or does the rain storm scourge them?
It is not the wind at war there, it is not the rain that scourges,
It is only Charos passing across them with the dead;
He drives the youths before him, the old folk drags behind,
And he bears the tender little ones in a line at his saddle-bow.
The old men beg a grace, the young kneel to implore him,
"Good Charos, halt in the village, or halt by some cool fountain,
That the old men may drink water, the young men play at the stone-throwing,
And that the little children may go and gather flowers."
"In never a village will I halt, nor yet by a cool fountain,
The mothers would come for water, and recognize their children,
The married folk would know each other, and I should never part them." [7]

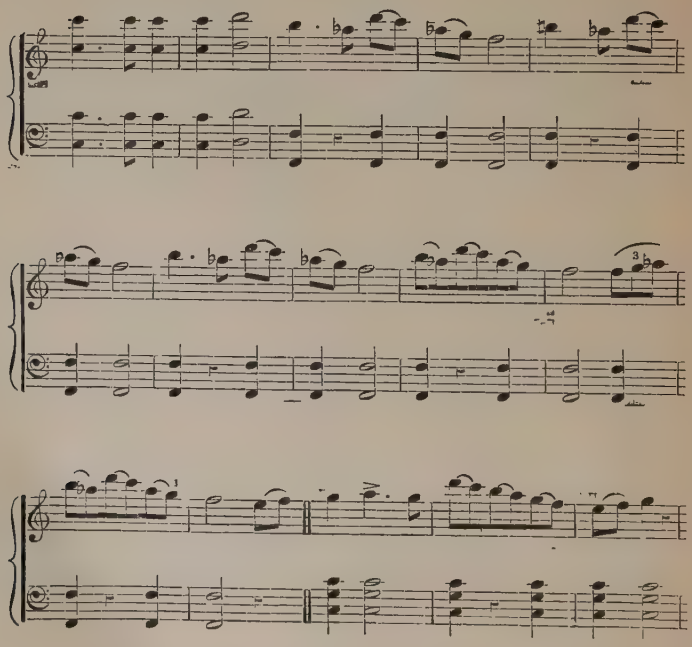
[7] Passow.

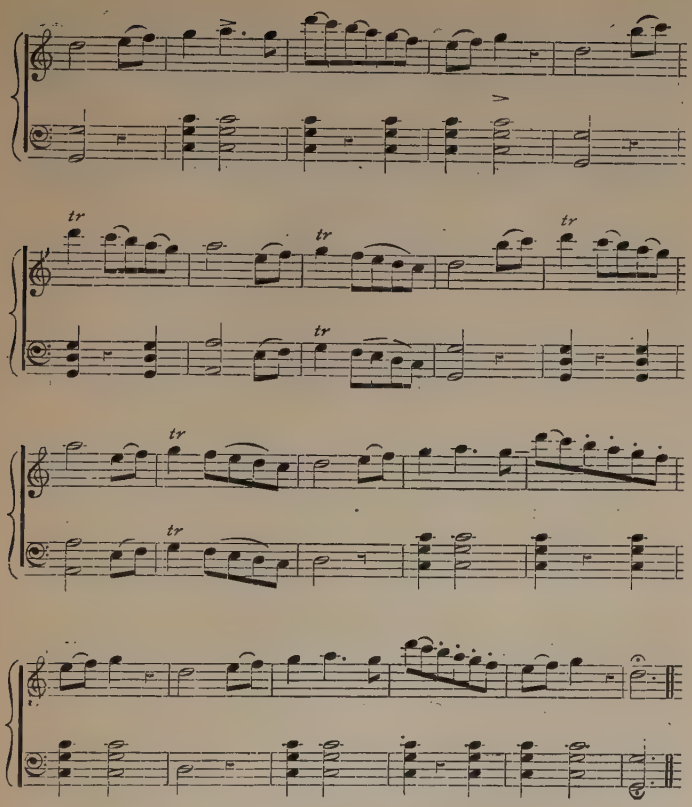
# APPENDIX.

## DANCE MUSIC.

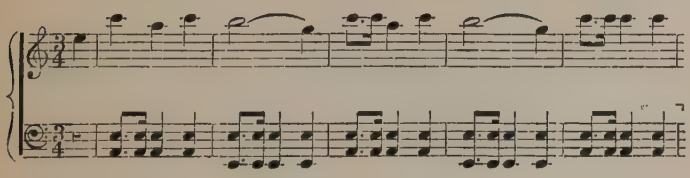
THE music of the people in Greece is Oriental in character, incomprehensible and generally unsympathetic to a Western ear. The peasant at the plough, the idler in the street, and the boatman steering his caïque, sing the whole livelong day; but their song is a minor cadence of semitones recurring with melancholy iteration, and ending in a kind of nasal drone. The women, with their shrill voices piping their semitones in concert as they dance, produce a weird sort of bird-like twittering sound. It is not possible for one without musical knowledge to analyse or even adequately describe these unfamiliar sounds. The only observations which I was able to make myself upon the subject were, that the singing of the people had nothing in common with the merry tunes which I heard shepherd boys in Ætolia playing on the six-stopped pipe cut from a hollow cane in the old traditional way, and which are possibly as old as the instrument itself, and that it is no less widely removed in character from the chants of the Orthodox Church. I should therefore be inclined to conclude that this mode of singing dates from the Turkish occupation.

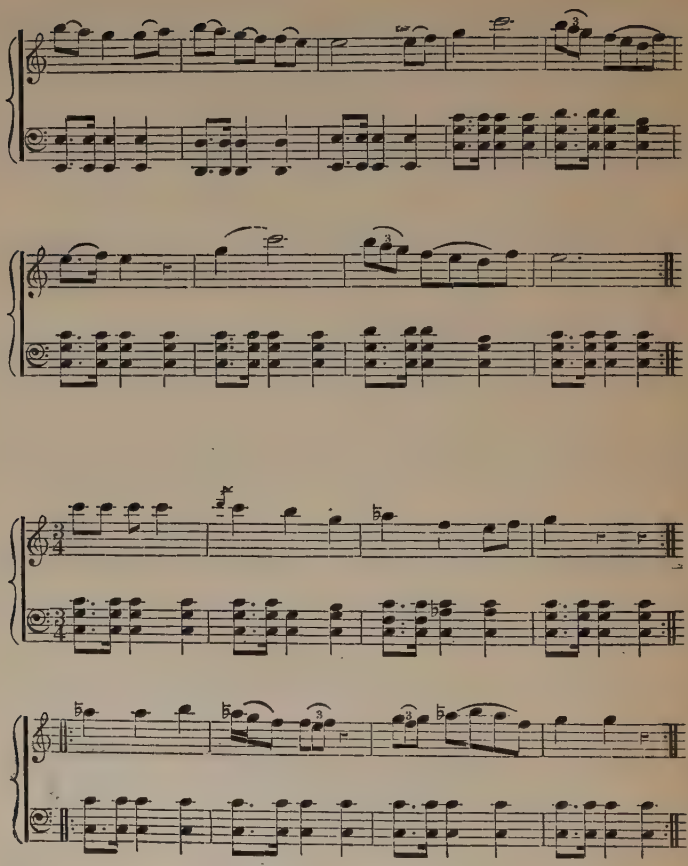
The instruments with which the accompaniment of the dance is played have been already alluded to; the three-stringed almond-shaped fiddle of the islands, the rude mandolin played with a *plectrum* of quill or tortoise-shell, the drum, and the screeching reed-pipes, like those of the Italian *pifferari.* The general effect produced is not unlike the music of the pipes and drums of an Arab village band. A few of the popular dances have been arranged for the piano, so that it is possible to give some idea of the measure, though the character of the music lies chiefly in the nature of the instruments. A few bars will suffice to convey the lilt to which the livelier *Tziamikos* is executed:






while the two following airs may be taken as fairly representing the graver movement of the *Syrtos* or *Clistos*.





## GLOSSARY OF WORDS OF GREEK OR FOREIGN ORIGIN OCCURRING IN THE TEXT.

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*Aga*—a subordinate district governor under the Turkish domination.

*Anathemata*—votive offerings.

*Armatoli*—the local militia in northern Greece, perhaps already existing under the Byzantine emperors, recognized and developed by the Turkish invaders. p. 221, &c.

*Clistos* (= closed)—a Greek dance. p. 86.

*Demarch*—governor of a deme, corresponds to mayor, though the authority of the demarch in the country extends over a wide area, the deme being a subdivision of a province.

*Epitaphion*—the religious procession in imitation of a funeral on the night of Good Friday. p. 150.

*Fezé* (=fez)—the red cap worn by women in the Morea. p. 74.

*Fustanella*—the white linen skirt or kilt of the Albanian dress now generally adopted as the Greek national costume. p. 73.

*Ikon* (= image, likeness)—the sacred pictures in churches, portraits of the Virgin and saints.

*Kalikantsari*—goblins which appear between Christmas and the Epiphany. Probably from Turkish Kara-kono-jolos, *loup-garou*. p. 198.

*Katakhanas*—Cretan name for the vampire. p. 188, &c.

*Klepht* (= robber)—the name given to the guerilla bands which infested the mountains of Greece and Albania during the Turkish domination. See chap. ix.

*Kolliva*—cakes prepared on special occasions, for funerals and solemnities. pp. 126, 149.

*Kolovelones*—Athenian name for the Kalikantsari.

*Kondogouni*—a short white jacket worn by women in Greece and Albania. p. 75.

*Koullouria*—cakes or biscuits made in the shape of a ring.

*Koumbáros* (= compere, *It.* compare)—the name is reciprocally given by godchildren to godfathers, and godfathers to godchildren, and covers all members of a family between whom such a tie exists. This artificial relationship acts as a bar on intermarriage. At weddings also an influential friend or relation is named Koumbáros to the bride, and among the poorer people he provides a part at any rate of the wedding entertainment, and is bound to care for the wife and children should they be left destitute. pp. 91 and 109, note.

*Lamia*—a malignant fairy. p. 185.

*Leventikos*—a dance executed by two dancers. p. 85.

*Liméri* (*Limeria*, pl.)—the place of rendezvous of the Klephts; said to be derived from ὅλην ἡμέραν = *all day*, because the Klephts remained during the day in their mountain hiding-places, and only issued upon their forays by night. p. 225.

*Mora*—the name of a Lamia in Athenian folk-lore. p. 187.

*Myrology*—a dirge sung by the women over the dead, or at the side of the grave on anniversaries; often improvised. p. 128, and chap. xi.

*Nereids*—now about equivalent to our fairy. Chap. vii., *passim.*

*Pallikar*—the rank and file of the *Amatoli* were called *pallikari*, and the lieutenant was known as the proto-pallikar. Thence the name was given to the Kleptic warriors, and is now used merely in the sense of a "young gallant."

*Panaghia*—the Virgin; etymologically, the all-holy one; whence the common Christian name Panaghiotes.

*Paneguris*—a fair or festival, generally celebrated on the day of the patron saint of the church in the neighbourhood of which it takes place. Sometimes the religious, sometimes the secular character predominates, but the same name is used in either case. p. 82.

*Pappas*—the Pope or Priest of the Greek Church.

*Paramythia*—fables or folk-stories.

*Paranymphos*—the "best man" at a wedding.

*Pendalpha*—the five letters IOXON, monogram of Ἰησοῦς χριστὸς νικᾶ, "Jesus Christ is victorious," symbolically engraved on charms and amulets. p. 126.

*Primate*—Latinised form of Turkish Kodja-bashi.

"The primates in Greece formed a substitute for an aristocracy. . . . . A voivode or bey purchased the taxes of a district as farmer-general. He then sublet the different branches of revenue to Greek primates, who again usually relet their portions in smaller shares to the local magistrates."—*Finlay*, "*Hist. of Greece*," *vol. vi.*, *book i.*, *chap. i.*

*Stoicheion*—lit., element. The elementary spirit or deity inherent in natural objects, places, &c., genius of the spot. p. 168.

*Strigla*—witch or weir-wolf. p. 187.

*Syrtos*—a dance executed by a number of dancers in a line. p. 86.

*Tratta*—the dance peculiar to Megara. p. 88.

*Tsiamikos*—a dance which takes its name from the Tzame or Schumik Albanians.

*Tsaroukia*—leather shoes with upturning points worn by country-folk in Greece.

*Vlach* (= Wallach)—a name given throughout Greece to the nomad shepherds, owing to so many of them being of Wallach origin.

*Vlam*—the bridegroom's friend or "best man" in the Albanian marriage ceremony. p. 104.

*Vourkolakas*—a word of Slavonic origin; generally = vampire, but it is also used for ghost or phantom. p. 188.

*Vrátimi*—the conductors of the wedding ceremony in northern Greece (Mount Pelion). p. 94.

*Zipouni*—the long sleeveless coat worn by women in the Albanian costume now generally adopted in Greece.

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